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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

GORDON McLENNAN — THE FIGHT FOR SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

JUDITH TODD — ARE BOOKS DIFFERENT?

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Marxism Today

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Editorial Comments

ON the request of his Government, Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, requested that an item on the Economics of Disarmament should be placed on the agenda of the Seventeenth General Assembly of the United Nations as "an independent and urgent matter of great importance to all states and peoples". At the same time the Soviet delegation submitted a draft declaration on the use of the funds and resources that would be set free by disarmament.

Just what general disarmament *could* mean for the peoples of the world is well demonstrated in the draft declaration. It would lift the heavy burden of military expenditures and make it possible to use every year an additional sum of some $120,000 million to meet the most urgent needs of mankind. In twenty-five years the total benefit would amount to around *three million million dollars*, or, approximately, *to the total value of the wealth created up to now by the labour of mankind throughout the world.*

The draft particularly stresses what this could mean to the underdeveloped countries:

> "If, for instance, one-fifth of the funds which the member-states of military-political groupings are spending on military purposes were used for promoting the economic development of underdeveloped countries, this would amount to 20,000 million dollars annually or 500,000 million dollars in twenty-five years. According to the available estimates, this sum, together with the internal efforts and sources of accumulation, would be sufficient for the economically underdeveloped countries, during the lifetime of the present generation, that is to say within the next twenty to twenty-five years, to overcome their economic backwardness and approach the present level of industrial production in such advanced countries as Britain or France."

In terms of statistics these calculations are completely realistic. Can they be made realistic in terms of politics? This is the issue that faces the peoples of the world in their struggle for peace.

Pugwash

The tenth Pugwash Conference was held in London from September 3rd-7th. The platform, which ranged from Lord Russell to Lord Hailsham, was once again remarkable for its broadness.

The movement takes its name from the first small meeting which was held in 1957 at Pugwash, a fishing village in Nova Scotia, Canada, where Cyrus Eaton, the banker who supports peaceful coexistence, was born.

To prepare this last conference £30,000 was raised by Britain's foremost learned scientific society, the Royal Society, who were acting as host, and was attended by more than two hundred scientists from thirty-five countries,

Previous Pugwash conferences sought little publicity at the time of meeting, but whilst the discussions of the tenth and largest one remain private the opening ceremony was public. The subjects discussed included the position of scientists in the community, scientists and world security, international scientific collaboration, science and education and the future of the Pugwash movement. The general title of the conference—"Scientists and World Affairs"—shows how its scope has broadened. The movement seems likely to preserve its unique character as one in which scientists holding top government posts in different countries can discuss informally with each other. But the primary purpose of Pugwash remains discussion of disarmament, which was the theme of the ninth similar conference held at Caius College, Cambridge, at the end of August and of the statement from the London meeting.

This statement described general and complete disarmament as "the most urgent issue in world affairs" and described a nuclear war as a "disaster of unimaginable magnitude". The scientists at Pugwash rejected the arms race. They declared:

> "Throughout the world competition in armaments absorbs an immense amount of talent and resources. This is wasted because so far from giving security, it increases the risk of war. Against global rockets with thermonuclear warheads there is no effective defence. In this situation, the traditional view of war, or the threat of war as an instrument of policy is obsolete. War must be eliminated from the life of mankind."

An interesting practical suggestion for improving means of detecting nuclear tests was the use of sealed "black boxes"—automatic seismic stations—in agreed numbers by the host nation after being sealed by an international authority. These would not, in the opinion of the Pugwash scientists, including those from the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., endanger the security of any country, and records of the instruments would be sent to an international commission. By now it is clear that very few scientists indeed have any doubt that underground nuclear explosions *can* be detected and identified.

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Liberal Party Assembly

The aims of the Liberal Party chiefs at this year's Assembly were to present the public with an image of an "up-to-date, vigorous, class-free party in tune with the needs of today", as the Chairman of the Party's Forward Planning Committee said; to turn the heat on winning Labour voters, for which purpose a special campaign is to be launched in Labour wards; and to convince the electorate that the Liberal Party was "responsible" and that it could be trusted to govern the country.

What emerged was an image of a cold war, nuclear-weapon-supporting organisation, enthusiastically taking upon itself the role of pace maker of the destruction of British sovereignty and far from being radical, showing itself to be strongly anti-socialist.

Mr. Grimond's speech came at the very end o the Assembly. As with the Tory Leader, the Liberal Leader did not speak in any debate but provided the faithful with the ineffable benefit of his wisdom after they had spoken. This speech was notable for the attack launched on Mr. Gaitskell, who was accused in fiery oratory of opposing entry into the Common Market. The evidence for Gaitskell's guilt was the latter's television broadcast in which he had shifted his position on the fence because his first position had become so uncomfortable. But from Grimond's attack you would have thought Gaitskell had not only leaped off the fence but was leading the anti-Common Marketeers into battle, flags flying. How small minded was Gaitskell, Grimond cried. How petty, not to see the great opportunity, the great spirit of the age, the great movement of which we must be part, and so on and on and on, until one wondered whether Peter Sellers had managed to swap places with Mr. Grimond. For this appeal to merge with "Europe" dressed-up in lofty language was, in fact, an appeal to sink this country into a reactionary backward-looking set-up dominated by the German and French monopolists represented by Adenauer and de Gaulle, whose ideas on human society are several centuries behind the times.

As for the actual business, there were resolutions and reports adopted on partnership in industry aiming at improved class collaboration, a means test for all council tenants, a transport service on a "proper commercial footing", all motorways to be toll roads, rejection of reduced taxation, a five-year plan for industry with a target date of growth geared to that of West Europe, pooling Britain's currency reserves with those of the Common Market, entry into the Common Market. Support for a merger in a Federation of West European States was given, according to *The Times* correspondent, with a "positively eager dismissal of national sovereignty as an utterly discredited concept". There was support for a nuclear NATO, while a proposal to oppose all nuclear tests was turned down in favour of opposition pending an international agreement.

In putting the case for the Executive's nuclear policy, Dr. Jeremy Thorpe, M.P., distinguished himself for the ferocity of the anti-Soviet note he struck, and it is worth noting that a member of the Executive, Mr. Richard Moore, who is also Secretary-General of the Liberal International, addressing that body a couple of weeks before the Assembly, dwelt at length on improved Liberal methods of conducting the cold war and declared that it would be a betrayal to accept that Eastern Europe is forever within the "Soviet sphere" as he called it. The Assembly was attended by 1,500 delegates. Liberal Party membership was up by one-third, income was doubled and votes were up.

The Liberal leaders quite clearly are out to fight right-wing Labour at their own game of being better Tories than the Tories. Fond hopes by Labour right-wingers of helping the Liberals take votes away from the Tories to let Labour in went for a burton at this Assembly. Labour will have to fight the Liberals as well as the Tories if it is to win the voters who are turning against Macmillan.

Inspector on the Line

At the British Association meeting last August, Mr. Percy Wilson, Senior Chief Inspector at the Ministry of Education, certainly launched a broadside at the English educational system—particularly at the grammar schools. His chief target was the narrowing and insensate over-specialisation at these schools. "The time-table of three or four out of five sixth formers made no sense at all," he said, adding that the textbooks used were often out of date "and chopped up into miserable little patches of inert knowledge," while much of the work in the fourth and fifth forms "is untouched by any mark of modern thought and discovery". The teaching is "anti-cultural as well as anti-educational"—the sixth forms of our grammar schools were now specialised "to a degree unknown elsewhere in the world". If this goes on we shall see "a visible deterioration of standards and the visible manifestation of ignorance, incompetence and barbarism".

These are strong words from a high official, one who surely bears—as he had the grace to admit at a press conference—at least some responsibility for the situation that is developing. The chief cause of the enhanced cramming and rote learning in grammar schools, as he pointed out, is the rapidly growing competitive pressure to gain a place at a university. Mr. Wilson stressed the urgent necessity for "a considerable quantitative increase in the provision for higher education". Given this, plus the cutting out of much dead wood in the curriculum, it should

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be possible to develop an all-round, cohesive education, both at school and at the university.

The Communist Party, in its evidence to the Robbins Committee, strongly emphasised the catastrophic effects of the 18-plus bottleneck on the schools, and argued for a very substantial increase in all forms of higher education, including the universities. It is interesting to find this thesis so strongly supported by the Chief Inspector of schools. Is the wind of change blowing through the Ministry of Education? As chairman of another session at the meeting, where a very effective paper was read showing how the practice of streaming in junior schools discriminated against working-class children, Mr. Wilson commented that such streaming "should be reduced to a minimum". This is what Communist Party teachers, almost alone, have been saying for over ten years—what is more, they have taken the lead in showing in practice that non-streaming works.

Death of Hans Eisler

Hans Eisler, one of the greatest figures of twentieth-century music, died on September 7th at the age of sixty-four. A conscript in the Austrian army during the First World War, he found his way to the militant German working-class movement in the early 1920's and from then on, whether in Berlin, Moscow, London, New York or Hollywood, or for the last fourteen years in the eastern sector of divided Berlin, he fought in the forefront of human progress, for peace and socialism, against war and exploitation.

His weapons in the fight were his musical compositions. He left over 500 songs, of which 200 have already appeared in the first five volumes of a collected edition, published in East Berlin. They range from unison songs with piano or accordion accompaniment which anyone can sing, such as the "United Front Song" and the "Solidarity Song", to elaborate cantatas and the "German Symphony", a work for chorus, soloists and orchestra lasting over an hour, which was broadcast by the B.B.C. early this year.

These songs deal with every aspect of the contradictions of capitalism and the struggle for peace and socialism from the 1920's onwards. Many of the poems are by Brecht, others by German revolutionary poets such as Becher, Ludwig Renn and Erich Weinert. He also set Goethe and even Shakespeare.

Eisler came as a refugee to England in 1934 and was introduced to the workers of London at a Concert-Demonstration, held in Morley College at the beginning of that year. Later Alan Bush conducted ten performances in different parts of London of *The Expedient* (words by Brecht), a short but intensely dramatic play with songs and choruses.

At that time his great agitational songs of the working-class struggle became quite well known here. Their style, although it has affinities with some aspects of jazz, is remote from that of the rather good-natured sounding working-class songs from the U.S.A., in which fierce words are often wedded to smooth music. Brecht wrote the following about them:

> "The attitude of the songs is revolutionary in the highest sense. This music develops in both hearers and performers the powerful impulses of a historic period in which productivity of every kind is the source of all pleasure and morality. It arouses new tenderness and strength, endurance and flexibility, impatience and prudence, demands for progress and the power of self-sacrifice. Through Eisler's work we learn to know the impulse and perspective of the new world which is being built."

Their absence at the moment from our working-class musical scene is a weakness we should try to overcome. Eisler's songs are already classics, but they are not museum pieces, they are a constant source of militancy and solidarity in the fight for peace and socialism.

Greek Political Prisoners

There are still over 1,100 political prisoners in Greek gaols. Of these, one-half are Resistance Fighters sentenced in 1945 and 1946 for crimes committed during the occupation, i.e. killing Greek Quislings who were fighting within or beside the Nazi Occupation forces.

Most of the others were sentenced by Special Courts Martial after farcical trials during and following the Civil War (1946-49). Just how farcical can be judged by the fact that 14,000 out of 16,000 appeals against these court martial sentences were allowed.

One successful appeal was made as recently as July 22nd of this year in the Patras Court of Assizes, where a forty-four-year-old teacher, Apostolos Apostolopoulos was released after serving sixteen years in prison for "killing" a member of a nationalist organisation. His original death sentence had been commuted first to life imprisonment, then to twenty years. The civil court that re-heard his case unanimously acquitted him.

Since 1945 the League for Democracy in Greece (376 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.) has been working for a general Amnesty for Greek political prisoners as well as sending relief to them and their families. Nearly 200 British individuals and organisations have "adopted" Greek prisoners, corresponding with them, sending help, etc. I am told that more of such "adopters" are urgently needed as well as cash to keep up the flow of relief, and I know from letters that I have seen from the recipients how deeply all such help is appreciated.

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Drama in Greece

There is a quite different aspect of Greece with which our readers will be, perhaps, less acquainted.

The cultural level of a nation is not to be measured simply by its material level. An economically backward people may have high cultural standards, and the converse is also true. Greece today is one of the poorest countries in Europe, comparable only with Spain, yet its civilisation is the oldest, and the people are proud of their cultural heritage, which still lives in their popular traditions, preserved through centuries of struggle.

During recent years many of the ancient theatres have been renovated and made available for the revival of the ancient Greek tragedies. The results have been astonishing. Thus, at Dodona this summer, to quote a single example, there were two performances, each of them attended by more than 25,000 people, many of them peasants who had travelled long distances on foot.

Last winter, Professor George Thomson gave a series of lectures, in the largest theatre in Athens, on ancient Greek tragedy. There were 2,000 at each lecture, and many were turned away. Last month (September) he gave another series, in a popular open-air theatre in one of the parks. There was again a full house (1,500) and many were turned away.

The Athenian public does not confine its interest to Greek tragedy. When the Old Vic performed *Romeo and Juliet* there a few weeks ago, the curtain fell amid scenes of indescribable enthusiasm. When will Greek tragedy evoke such a response in our own country?

Unity Theatre

Unity Theatre has played a unique role in the theatrical life of this country. Although an amateur theatre it pioneered the English "vernacular" drama, showing the life lived by ordinary people instead of presenting them as comic relief. It took the working-class actor from the music-hall and put him into the "legitimate" theatre.

It was Unity that first introduced to Britain the work of the young American realists like Odets, Rice, Shaw and others. Unity produced the plays of Soviet dramatists such as Simonov, and Afinogenev and first presented the work of the great German dramatist Brecht. It was Unity that brought to this country the "living newspaper", and after the war, developed a style in satirical review which has only recently been equalled. It is true that, theatrically, much that Unity first fought for has been or is being achieved. A new actor has taken the stage of the provincial theatre, an actor whose natural speech has not been swallowed in the mincing accents of South Kensington. Plays, which at one time could only have been seen at Unity Theatre are now acclaimed by larger audiences. Working-class characters are no longer thought of as comedy items.

But socialism, Unity's main aim, has not yet been achieved. And the need for theatres of the Labour movement still remains.

Unity was founded in 1936, from a combination of workers' drama groups. It hired a dosshouse, once a church hall in Kings Cross, and with the help of the London Labour movement turned it into a fully-equipped theatre.

Since then 180 plays, the vast majority of them new, have been performed. The theatre plays every Friday, Saturday and Sunday all the year round, in six to eight weekly repertory. There are many other activities, including classes for actors, a writers' group, folk-song evenings each Wednesday. The old building now proves inadequate.

A Trust Fund has been formed with Alan Bush as Chairman. The other three trustees are Alfie Bass, John Platts-Mills and David Lambert (Secretary of the Foundry Workers' Union). They have bought the freehold, and have launched an appeal to raise £50,000 for the cost of the freehold and for complete reconstruction of the building.

A new theatre—but retaining the walls of the old—has been designed by Arthur A. Stewart and Colin Penn, F.A.R.I.B.A., in consultation with Herbert Marshall, who designed the original version in 1936. The proposed theatre will seat 270 on one steeply-raked floor. There will be greatly increased depth of stage and wing space, a removable orchestra pit, much larger foyers, additional dressing room, office and rehearsal space. All this should help to create a really fine Labour movement cultural centre in London and we are sure all our readers will find the way as best they can to support this initiative.

Marxist Lectures

The power of attraction of communist ideas for young people shown in the remarkable growth of the Young Communist League is also finding expression among students. In the Universities communist bookstalls are showing record sales. Existing university branches have doubled their membership over the last eighteen months and new groups are being formed in Training and Technical colleges.

London students and the National Student Committee have taken a welcome initiative this month with a series of mass popular lectures with Professor George Thomson on "The Materialist Conception of History", Sam Aaronovitch on "The Inadequacy of Sociology", Arnold Kettle on "The Revolutionary Artist", Professor Bernal on "Science and the Humanities" and Maurice Dobb on "Ways of Industrialising Underdeveloped Countries" (see announcement on p. 335).

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The Fight for Scotland's Future

Gordon McLennan

THERE is no section of the British people more desirous of holding a general election and getting rid of the Tory government than the people of Scotland. To say they are frustrated and fed up with Macmillan and Company is to put it mildly. They are in an angry and militant mood and, when the general election takes place, will vote overwhelmingly against the Tories. Of this they gave a foretaste in the recent West Lothian by-election, when the Tory candidate's vote dropped by 13,299 as compared with the last general election, and when, for the first time in forty-two years, a Tory deposit was lost in a Scottish election.

Nor will the Scottish people wait passively until the government selects a suitable date. "A General Election Now" is as common a slogan in demonstrations and other mass activities in Scotland as is "Stop all Pit and Railway Closures".

This anti-Tory feeling is not something new. The Tories were rejected by the Scottish people at the last general election when 1,254,117 electors voted for candidates of the present government, whilst 1,413,225 voted for other candidates, making thirty-eight Labour M.P.s, thirty-one Tory M.P.s, one Liberal M.P. and one Independent for the Scottish constituencies. To reject a government and then be subjected to its anti-working-class, anti-Scottish policies, is a bitter pill that the Scottish people are not prepared to swallow.

The present anti-government feeling goes far beyond those men and women who traditionally vote against the Tories. It will be no surprise for anyone to read the declaration of the Scottish Trades Union Congress that:

> "The danger to Scotland of becoming an area denuded of much of its traditional industries like coal, steel, shipbuilding, ironfounding, heavy engineering, railways and railway workshops, is positive and real. None of the measures taken by the government have been tackled to give even temporary immunity to the workers against unemployment, redundancy or short-time working."

But one begins to appreciate better the scope of the feeling in Scotland when one reads a statement of the Scottish Council (Industrial and Development) which is an organisation dominated by employers, to the effect that:

> ". . . Recognition of the size and urgency of the need must dictate bold and imaginative large-scale action. The Council does not believe that the government has even now, in the midst of its other preoccupations really faced up to the nature of the situation. . . ."

The feeling arises from the growing conviction among all sections of the population that Scotland "is getting a raw deal" and that, as far as the Tory government is concerned, Scotland "is a write-off". An examination of the present economic situation in Scotland gives ample substance to this view.

Unemployment

For many years the Scottish rate of unemployment has been roughly twice the national average. Despite government promises and talk of "jobs in the pipeline" the Tories have not reduced the number of unemployed in Scotland to even the national average, and now as the national rate of unemployment rises, so, too, does the Scottish rate.

At September 10th, 1962, there were 82,780 workers unemployed in Scotland, a rate of 3·8 per cent against the rate for Great Britain of 2·1 per cent. The main industrial areas had higher unemployment than the average, with Greenock/Port Glasgow area at 7·4 per cent, North Lanarkshire 6.5 per cent, Dundee 5·3 per cent and Glasgow 4·2 per cent. Nor do these figures reveal the full gravity of the situation. There is widespread short-time working, reduction in the amount of overtime being worked and many hours of "waiting-time for work" in engineering factories.

An especially damning indictment of the government's policy and its results in Scotland is the problem facing thousands of young people. At September 10th of this year, 7,285 young people under eighteen years of age were unemployed—an increase of 3,691 on September of the previous year. The number of boys unemployed increased by 2,377 over the year, while the number of unfilled vacancies for boys decreased over the same period from 2,063 to 835. The number of girls unemployed increased by 1,314 over the same year and unfilled vacancies for them dropped from 3,650 to 1,662.

A graphic description of what this means for young people was given recently in a Lanarkshire newspaper, who reported how 300 young boys, many of them with a recommendation from their schoolmasters, applied for jobs with an engineering firm in Airdrie/Coatbridge area which had advertised fifteen vacancies. This is what is taking place increasingly in the industrial areas of Scotland and it is not difficult to imagine what such experiences

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mean in terms of smashing the hopes and aspirations of the youth. It is clear that the great talent and ability of thousands of Scotland's young people is being thwarted and destroyed in dead-end unskilled jobs and in unemployment.

Emigration

The only answer to unemployment, lack of prospects, poor housing and social conditions, is to stay in Scotland, fight against Tory policies and lay the basis for changing the system which has brought Scotland to its present plight. Many men and women do not see this as a logical conclusion of an examination of Scotland's ills, or even if they do see it, refuse to face up to the struggle involved and so try to solve their problems by emigrating. This is no new "solution".

In 1855 the population of Scotland was just under 3 million. Since then, there has been a natural population increase of over 4 million, so, without emigration, the population should be today more than 7 million. The last census in 1961, however, established the population of Scotland as 5,178,490.

The most rapid rate of emigration was in the period between the two world wars, when unemployment in Scotland was consistently two to three times higher than the average for Great Britain as a whole. Between 1921 and 1930, 400,000 Scottish men, women and children left their native land. Emigration has continued throughout the post-war years at a high level and is now increasing. Between 1951 and 1961, 270,000 people left Scotland and in the last twelve months a further 34,000.

European Common Market

Present economic problems in Scotland would be further worsened if Britain enters the European Common Market. British membership of the European Coal and Steel Community would result in the closure of more Scottish pits and adversely affect the steel industry. Agriculture and horticulture would undoubtedly suffer by Britain's entry and closures would take place in the jute industry. Two important engineering firms with factories in Glasgow—L. Sterne & Co. (Refrigeration) and Olivetti Ltd. (Typewriters)—have already declared that Britain's entry into the Market could result in "pay-offs" in *their* factories.

This raises the whole question of the impact of British membership of the Market on those firms with factories in Scotland, where control of the policy of the firm lies outside Scotland. There are fifty-five American-controlled concerns operating in Scotland with a labour force of 60,000 workers and many English-controlled companies with a further 150,000 workers. The trend towards monopoly and centralisation already developing in Britain would be intensified by entry into the European Common Market. This could lead to the closure of Scottish branch factories of English and American concerns and an acceleration of the drive towards economic slump and mass unemployment.

Stagnant Economy

The obvious signs of economic difficulties are seen by many people—higher unemployment, fewer vacancies, short-time working and increased emigration. What seems not so clear are the signs of stagnation in industrial production in general, and yet those must be understood for a real appreciation of the nature of the crisis facing Scotland.

For many years the increase in Scotland's industrial production has been lagging behind that of the United Kingdom as a whole. Between 1954 and 1959 industrial production in the United Kingdom rose by 13 per cent, whilst in the same period it rose in Scotland by 3 per cent. *In the last year there has been no increase at all.*

The official index of industrial production for Scotland, published on July 24th of this year, states:

> "In the first quarter of this year industrial activity in Scotland was maintained at the same level as a year earlier. The failure to expand was mainly due to the continued low rate of steel production. Metal manufacture as a whole has been at a low level since the middle of 1961 and in the first quarter of this year was 23 per cent less than a year earlier.
> . . .
> "The engineering and electrical goods industries which in recent years have expanded their output, until in 1961 it was 26 per cent higher than in 1954, did not achieve any increase in the first quarter of this year. The output was, in fact, marginally lower than in the corresponding period of 1961."

This depressing picture of stagnation of industrial production in general does not reveal the full depth of the crisis in Scotland. This can only be understood by examining the present position in the basic industries and the prospects which they face if Tory policy is forced through in the next few years.

The situation in the basic industries is the touchstone of the Scottish economic position.

Coal Mining

Over 130 Scottish pits have been closed in the last seventeen years and manpower has dropped from 81,820 in 1945 to 62,000 in 1962. In the middle of *this year we entered a new phase of the battle to preserve* Scotland's coal industry when the National Coal Board published their review of prospects of the Scottish coalfield over the next five years. This review placed all pits working on June 30th into three categories. The first—Class A—are pits where reserves are quite adequate to last over the five-year period and where generally there is potential to enable economic working to be pursued. The second —Class B—are pits where results, because of work-

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ing conditions, have been generally unprofitable and where their potential is doubtful. Many of these are likely to close within the period, some quite soon, and the continued existence of the remainder will depend on two factors, demand and their own performance. The third class—Class C—are pits in which the realistic reserves still available within reasonable access to the shifts or drifts are very limited and which will be exhausted at varying times before the end of 1966.

The Class A pits employed 38,000 men on June 30th of this year and the Coal Board expect to increase the manpower in these pits to 46,000 by 1966. The Class B pits employed 16,000 and the Class C pits 8,000 men on the same date. If the Coal Board have their way all Class C pits will be closed down well before 1966, and the majority of Class B pits as well. The most optimistic estimate that the Board is prepared to make is that by 1966, 50,000 to 51,000 men may be employed in the Scottish pits, i.e. a reduction of 11,000 on present manpower.

There is no doubt, however, that this is an *extremely optimistic estimate and unless the policy of pit* closures is stopped all Class B pits will be closed down in the next five years and many Class A pits as well. The real situation facing the miners and the people of Scotland was correctly put by Alex Moffat, President of the Scottish Area of the National Union of Miners, when he said: "If the government and the Coal Board continue to pursue their present policies there is no such thing as a 'safe' pit in Scotland."

Railways

Seven hundred route miles of railway line have been abandoned in Scotland in post-war years and many stations and goods yards have been closed down, with consequent reduction of manpower. This process was taken a stage further on September 20th when the British Transport Commission announced the closure of Cowlairs Railway Workshop in Glasgow and the reduction of the labour force in all Scottish railway workshops by between 450-500 men.

The total plan of cuts in the British railway system will not be announced until later this year, but Mr. Greene, General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, has publicly stated that he expects one in every three railwaymen to lose his job by 1966 if the "Beeching cuts" go through. Dr. Beeching, the government hatchet man in the British Transport Commission, has said that: "profitability is the only test" and "my job is to make the railways pay. The social and economic consequences are not my concern". But they *must* concern the people of Scotland: for if the Beeching medicine is administered the outlook is bleak for railwaymen and for Scotland.

Of the 2,750 passenger trains which run daily in Scotland, between 1,600 and 2,000 are non-profit makers, and many of them lose heavily. The position with freight trains is little better. In terms of freight revenue, each mile of Scottish route and each Scottish freight station rates little more than half the British average. Application of the Beeching formula would, therefore, have disastrous social and economic consequences for Scotland. It would mean thousands of railwaymen unemployed, whole communities cut off, the rural areas further depopulated, the roads subject to impossible congestion and industry (which the government is supposed to be trying to attract to Scotland) driven out of the country because of lack of an effective transport system.

Shipbuilding and Steel

Sixty-eight thousand Scottish workers are employed in shipbuilding and marine engineering, and 23,000 in iron and steel manufacture. Both these industries are in an unhealthy state and unemployment and short-term working among shipbuilding workers and steel workers is increasing.

Lord Aberconway, Chairman of John Brown's Ltd., who control the largest shipyard on the Clyde, told the recent annual meeting of directors: "Our yard at Clydebank, like every other Clyde shipyard, is under-employed, and I see little prospect of a change in the next two or three years."

Scotland builds slightly more than one-third of all British shipping and the total average annual output in post-war years is around 450,000 tons. One can hardly say that Lord Aberconway was unduly pessimistic when it is known that all the orders for new ships received by Scottish yards in the first six months of 1962 totalled 70,000 tons—enough work to keep the yards going for about eight weeks!

The steel industry, dependent to a large extent on the situation in shipbuilding, is operating at 50-60 per cent capacity. In the first quarter of 1962 the output of crude steel and pig-iron fell by 34 per cent to 453,654 tons and 233,274 tons respectively. There was a slight improvement in the second quarter of the year, but steel production was still down by 20 per cent on the corresponding period of 1961 and pig-iron production by 30 per cent.

The General Council of the Scottish Trades Union Congress underlined the gravity of the position. In their report to the 1962 Congress on the steel industry, they stated:

> "We have been kept fully informed about the state of the industry in Scotland. For some considerable time there has been extensive short-time working throughout practically all the Scottish iron and steel works. At the time of reporting it is estimated that steel production is down to 60 per cent of capacity, with almost 85 per cent of the labour force on short-time working. Redundancy on a fairly large scale is being avoided, therefore, only by spreading work."

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Balance of Scottish Industry

What has been called the "curse" of Scotland's economy has been a disproportionate dependence on the heavy or basic industries of coal, steel, shipbuilding and heavy engineering. These industries dominate the economy and have at times of boom employed over one-quarter of the male working population. When dependent subsidiary industries and economic undertakings are taken into account, it could be fairly said that more than one-half of the Scottish people are personally affected by the economic fluctuations of these industries.

Basic industries are among the first victims of capitalist crisis and, in the years between the two world wars, suffered mass closure and severe cutbacks in production and employment. The consequences for Scotland were disastrous and from 1920-39, Scotland was one huge economically-depressed area, with millions of people living in poverty and hunger. Even in the early part of 1939, there were 288,703 workers unemployed—18·4 per cent of the insured population—and only in the course of the Second World War did full employment obtain in Scotland. The results in human misery and suffering for the people of Scotland as a result of capitalist slump has led to an attitude of mind among many people that our over-dependence on heavy industry in the past was responsible for the severity of the crisis in Scotland and that it might be a good thing if we were less dependent on it in future. This attitude, which is in part an expression of the demand for the introduction of new industries and a balanced economy, can be extremely dangerous if it leads to a lack of concern or a fatalistic approach to what is happening *now* in basic industries.

The Toothill Committee, whose recommendations on Scotland's economy received a great deal of publicity some months ago, gave a classic demonstration of the end result of such an attitude. At the same time as they presented demands for government action and made their proposals for stimulation of the economy, they commented "we do not want to prop up dying industries". They did not specify what industries they were referring to, but it is ominous that in their "Plan for the Future" they made no proposals on shipbuilding and that the parent body of the Toothill Committee, the Scottish Council (Development and Industry) is not opposed to the principles of government policy in relation to pit and railway closures. To demand the introduction of new industries, to *replace* the so-called "dying" industries of coal and heavy engineering is an entirely wrong approach to the future of Scotland's economy. A prosperous economic future can only be built on the basis of an expansion of the heavy industries, whilst *at the same time*, "new" or "light" industries are developed to provide a balanced economy.

It is an important political development that large sections of the Scottish people and their organisations, who have previously supported Tory policies, are now in opposition to what the government is doing in Scotland. If these sections, however, concede at the outset of the struggle, as they are doing now, certain principles of that policy such as "the necessity for some pit and rail closures" and "industry cannot be compulsorily directed in an economy based on private enterprise", then they are doomed to failure in their struggle to salvage anything substantial from the wreckage being wrought by government policy. They will never be able to give the kind of leadership needed in the fight for a future for Scotland because they see it in terms of showing the advantages of developing industry in Scotland *as against* other parts of Britain. They laud Scotland's heritage, scenic beauty and the skill of the working people, not recognising that these mean little or nothing to the British ruling class, who are pursuing a policy in the interests of *their* class as a whole, regardless of the consequences for some of their fellow employers in Scotland and the overwhelming *majority of the Scottish people.*

Movement Against the Government's Policies

The battle for the future for Scotland is a *class* battle—a battle in which the interests of the Scottish workers are diametrically opposed to the interests of the British ruling class. It is a battle in which our allies are the working people in other parts of Britain affected, as we are, in greater or lesser degree, by the selfish anti-British policies of the monopolies who control Britain.

This is why the movement of the Scottish people must be headed by the organised working-class movement. Only they can give the firm militant leadership and exert the necessary strength to change government policy.

The militant struggle of the Scottish miners, the demonstrations of the railway workshop men in Glasgow, the token stoppages by Scottish railwaymen, the similar actions of workers in Rolls Royce, Remington Rand and other factories, have been of the greatest value in showing how to combat Tory policy. The General Council of the Scottish Trades Union Congress must now give leadership as never before. At their series of conferences being held throughout Scotland (October and November 1962) they can mobilise the entire population for the reversal of government policies and an early General Election.

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The Communist Party

The Communist Party in Scotland has conducted continuous activity for years on the various aspects of Scotland's economy. Our members are fighting along with their fellow workers in the mining, railway, shipbuilding, steel, heavy engineering and other industries, giving capable and clear leadership.

As a Party we have conducted hundreds of meetings and issued tens of thousands of leaflets explaining the problems faced by the people of Scotland, advancing our policy to solve the crisis. Now we have taken our campaign to a new level. We made efforts during July and August to secure an interview with the Secretary of State for Scotland so that we could put directly to him our views on the situation in Scotland. He would not agree to meet us, but asked that we send him our views in writing and, if there were any points he wished to take up with us, after studying our views, promised to get in touch with us. On September 21st we sent him a twelve-page Memorandum, outlining our policy and subsequently sent it to all the Scottish and National press, radio and television, all Scottish M.P.s, the Scottish Council of the Labour Party and the General Council of the Scottish T.U.C.

We placed in the forefront of our policy complete opposition to all pit and railway closures. We developed in our Memorandum our case for this attitude and challenged the whole basis and motives of the government's policy in these matters.

Policy for Coal

We argued that the real reasons for many pits in Scotland being "uneconomic" and for the Scottish Division of the Coal Board showing a deficit are: firstly, the large burden of compensation to former owners agreed to by the Labour government in 1945, and since accepted as correct by successive Tory governments; secondly, that this compensation plus interest on borrowed capital, necessary to modernise the industry, amounted to £42·4 million in 1961 and is a charge on the coal industry; thirdly, that, as Sir Charles Reid made abundantly clear in the Reid Plan, the former coal owners left a backward bankrupt industry into which hundreds of millions of pounds had to be poured to make it possible to produce the coal desperately needed by the nation in post-war years; and, fourthly, we maintain that the position has been made worse by inefficiency and mismanagement by the Coal Board resulting in the loss of millions of pounds.

We maintain that the number of "uneconomic" pits would be substantially reduced and the "deficit" in Scotland decisively cut down if compensation to the former owners was cut, if the financial burden accumulated as a result of modernising the industry was transferred to the National Exchequer, if coal distribution was taken out of the hands of private companies and, finally, if a Public Enquiry was held into the operations of the Coal Board in Scotland.

Until these steps are taken we cannot accept the closure of any pits as being justified except through direct exhaustion of coal reserves.

In answer to the argument that there is a fall in demand for coal, we pointed out that oil and imported fuel is being promoted at the expense of coal in order to ensure more profit for the oil companies. This anti-British policy destroys the one national fuel resource of the British people and makes us dependent on a foreign fuel supply which cannot be guaranteed in the years ahead. Moreover, the industry is stagnant as the result of the present government's policy, Increased unemployment, the pay pause and increased prices, rents and rates, have reduced the purchasing power of the people and they have bought less coal.

We show, further, that the demand for Scottish coal could be increased to 20 million tons per year by (a) a national fuel policy which estimates the national fuel power requirements of Britain for the next twenty years and gives coal a major place along with oil and nuclear energy in a plan to meet these requirements; (b) the stimulation of the economy based on rejection of the restrictive monetary and other policies of the present government and their replacement by policies that will ensure growth and development of the economy; (c) an increase in the purchasing power of the people.

These are the general lines along which the Communist Party points the way towards a solution of the crisis in Scotland's coal industry.

Policy for Rails and Shipbuilding

What is our reply to the closure policy of Dr. Beeching?

In our opinion the four main reasons for the "uneconomic" character of the economy are: (1) the colossal burden of interest on capital for modernising and previous debts accumulated by the industry; (2) the dismantling by the Tory government of the most profitable section of the railway industry and the handing of it over to the private road hauliers; (3) the government's policy of allowing the unrestricted issuing of "C" licences for vehicles carrying goods by road that *could* be transported by rail, and (4) the vast sums of money spent on modernising the industry that would never have been tackled if the industry had been in the control of private companies.

In relation to all these points we propose that the railway industry should be relieved of all debt burden accumulated to the present year and allowed to make a new beginning, that privately owned "A" licensed firms should be re-nationalised, that the

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road should be freed of traffic congestion by restricting the issue of "C" licences and confining the operation of "C" licensed vehicles to a definite local radius. We suggested, moreover, that an integrated transport system should be developed covering all road and rail transport throughout Britain and that railway workshops should be given priority in the construction of railway equipment and be allowed to manufacture general engineering equipment where orders are secured.

The logical development of the present policies of the British Transport Commission would result in Scotland in mass unemployment amongst railwaymen, further depopulation of the rural areas and Highlands and Islands, and the discouragement of possible new industry and the driving out of existing industry.

We, therefore, categorically reject the theory of Dr. Beeching and the government that "profitability is the only test". The railways are the public service as well as a business and must be seen as a public service in the same way as postal services, electricity supply and similar national undertakings.

With regard to shipbuilding, emergency measures are needed to meet the crisis in the industry and our immediate policy is that shipping built before 1942 should be scrapped and replaced by new vessels, and that British shipbuilding companies should be prevented by the government from placing orders for new vessels with foreign yards.

Direction of Industry to Scotland

All these steps to preserve and expand the important basic industries of Scotland must go hand in hand with the policy of compulsory direction of manufacturing industry to Scotland. The number of new jobs created in Scotland in post-war years by the introduction of new industries or the development of existing industries have been less than the jobs lost in the same period in traditional industries.

The government policy of "attracting" new industry to Scotland by what the President of the Board of Trade has called "a tougher policy in the granting of Industrial Development Certificates" has proved a miserable failure. This policy has not succeeded in achieving any decisive change in the balance of Scottish industry, nor has it solved the problem of reducing chronic unemployment in Scotland. We reject the argument that direction of industry involves simultaneously the direction of labour and, further, we point out that Scottish workers and their families, because of unemployment, bad social and housing conditions and lack of prospects for the future, are already being compelled to leave Scotland in vast numbers.

The Building Industry

Scotland needs a minimum of 500,000 new houses to bring housing standards in our country to the level at present pertaining in England. There should be an immediate reduction of interest charges to 2 per cent on government loans to Scottish Local Authorities so that these bodies are enabled to develop an extensive programme of house and other building. This will make possible the building of 50,000 houses per year for letting at rents that the people can afford. We recommend that the government should make a special drive to increase the labour force in the building industry by 40,000 and that a drastic cut should be made in all building construction and directly related to housing, health, education and employment considerations of the Scottish people. This would allow the transfer of thousands of building trade workers from unnecessary office and luxury building to factory, school, hospital and house building.

Policy for Youth

The present situation in relation to unemployment among youth is a tragedy, not only for the young people involved, it is a tragedy for Scotland. There can only be a real future for Scotland on the basis of a marked expansion of education and technology involving tens of thousands of our young people.

A vast programme of general and technical education is therefore an urgent necessity, along with other specific proposals to end large-scale unemployment among youth.

The main lines of our proposals are that the Government and Local Authorities should take over factory sites in a number of Scottish towns and cities where 2,000 young people could be trained for industry, the extension of day release classes for all young workers up to eighteen years of age, the prohibition of overtime work for all workers under eighteen years of age, the provision of facilities in existing and new Junior Colleges for 2,000 more young students and the establishment of a fifth university in Scotland, with the extension of the present universities and technical colleges and the siting of more government research establishments.

Such an advance in scientific and technical education in Scotland would only be possible on the basis of an extension of general education for young people of school age. We therefore emphasise the importance of action being taken by the government to raise the school-leaving age to sixteen years, to launch a great school building programme and to take emergency action to increase the number of school teachers in Scotland.

Our Party has consistently campaigned throughout its history for Scottish self-government and measures of devolution to be taken immediately as a step towards self-government. In our Memorandum

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to the Secretary of State we repeat our case for Scottish control of Scottish affairs and recommend a series of steps that could be taken right away, such as meetings of Scottish M.P.s four times a year in Edinburgh, to which other representatives of the Scottish people would be invited.

Scottish Control of Scottish Affairs

Action is needed now to meet the grave demand facing the Scottish people, and we have demanded that the Secretary of State should call a meeting of representatives of the Scottish people to discuss the present crisis.

Scotland is at a turning point in its history. Whether we go forward to a higher standard of living and long-term economic security, or back to mass unemployment, poverty and insecurity, depends on the decisions that will be taken in the next period ahead. The grave economic problems existing today in Scotland are the product of capitalism and are aggravated by the policies being pursued by the present government. It therefore follows that as well as fighting against the policies of the Tory government the Scottish working-class movement must develop the maximum possible activity to ensure an early General Election and the defeat of the Tories.

It will not be sufficient just to replace the government. The Scottish people, in common with the rest of the British people, need the kind of leadership that only the Communist Party can give. This is why, as we move towards a general election, we are increasing our activities in Parliamentary Constituencies where Communists will contest, at the same time striving to increase the membership and influence of our Party, the Young Communist League and the *Daily Worker* in every part of Scotland.

A stronger Communist Party with mass influence among the Scottish people is the only *guarantee* of a secure and prosperous future for the people of Scotland.

Are Books Different?

Judith Todd

IN June and July 1962, leading British publishers and booksellers appeared in the Gothic caverns of the Royal Courts of Justice to maintain, before the Restrictive Practices Court, that "books are different", and that the Net Book Agreement, the book trade's own form of resale price maintenance, was not a restrictive practice against the public interest. Most book-buyers have probably never stopped to consider why a new book costs the same wherever they buy it, why the price is printed as "x/- net", and why books (other than last Christmas's children's annuals) rarely appear in the supermarkets at "3d. off". While the hearing on the Agreement threw much light on the organisation of book production and distribution in Britain, the industry was already known to have undergone certain developments characteristic of British capitalism in its present form, which may suggest that it is not so "different" after all.

Net Book Agreement

The present Net Book Agreement, dating from 1957, is between members of the Publishers Association, who agree with each other that, when each publisher has decided on the retail price of a book, he will only sell it to wholesalers or booksellers on the terms that it should not be resold to the public under that fixed price. There are a number of qualifications, but the agreement is substantially the same as the original agreement made in 1899—except that, to comply with the Restrictive Trade Practices Act 1956, publishers no longer agree to apply collective sanctions to breakers of the agreement. The 1899 Agreement was brought about to end the anarchy and ruin threatening booksellers through a price-cutting war, waged principally by the comparatively new department stores with bestsellers; with a nice irony, the first "netted" book, published by Macmillan, was *Principles of Economics* by Alfred Marshall, a leading exponent of pre-Keynesian "free market" economics.

Thus the principal beneficiaries of the Agreement appeared to be the booksellers, who knew that under it they would not be undercut by rivals and driven out of business by a prolonged campaign of underselling against which they had not the capital to maintain a fight. The protection afforded to the booksellers in turn benefited the publishers, who could expect the booksellers to be bolder in buying quantities of books to hold in stock, knowing their price would not depreciate.

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The public also benefited, since its members, so the theory ran, could rely on finding a series of well-stocked bookshops to help them in their puchasing—for, as the publishers pleaded in 1962, a book is one commodity which frequently has to be handled and sampled before it can be sold.

Under the Agreement, therefore, the book trade from 1899 to 1962 should have resembled an idyllic landscape-with-figures, the figures being three archetypes: a gentlemanly publisher, commissioning over luncheon a series of worthy books, with a sprinkling of bestsellers and an occasional slim volume of verse; a scholarly bookseller, cherishing a wisely-chosen and comprehensive stock; and a book-buyer, both a scholar and a gentleman, browsing among the bookshop's well-stocked shelves and causing the cash-register to ring frequently enough for the bookseller to pay the publisher, and to provide both of them with a modicum of gracious living to match the graciousness expressed in the typical customer's private library.

Publishing Becomes Big Business

The picture has as much relation to reality as a Dickensian Christmas card. The book-buyer has, outside central London and certain university towns, the greatest difficulty in finding a well-stocked bookshop, though his opportunities for obtaining a random assortment of paperbacks have greatly increased in recent years. Many booksellers, finding they could not live by books alone, have given up more and more space to stationery, gramophone records and knick-knacks, and voiced more and more complaints about the insufficient discounts given them by publishers. Publishing has become increasingly a part of big business as rising costs have made more capital necessary for book production, and has also become attractive to capital for reasons unconnected with the superficial publisher-bookseller-private customer picture.

An important part of most publishers' output is not sold through British bookshops at all: it goes to school-contractors, library suppliers and for export. As an old-established trade, unconnected with defence or other forms of state subsidy, book production and distribution is poorly served with statistics, but current estimates are that, of the more than 300 million copies of British books sold in a year, 125 million are educational books, while the export market takes 50 per cent in volume and provides 40 per cent in value of the book trade's earnings. There are big possibilities of expansion in the export and textbook fields, which to some extent overlap. The foundation in Britain of new universities and technical colleges, and the increase in the school population, is paralleled on a vast scale by the potential demand for books in the newly liberated countries, particularly the former African colonies, where English is the common language of higher education, and where hundreds of thousands of technical and professional cadres have to be hastily trained to develop their own countries, held back till now by the policies of colonialism. It is the possibilities of profit in these fields abroad, as much as in the development of paperbacks as a mass entertainment medium at home, which have attracted finance capital to publishing, including the attempts of American capital to break into the British and Commonwealth market.

Larger, Ever Larger?

The home market, apart from paperbacks, has not yet felt the full effects of this trend, but the implications are clear. The formation of larger production units in any trade tends to drive out the smaller units, because the larger units have greater buying power, e.g. in competing for authors: the incursion of American firms is said to have driven up British paperback royalties to a general level of 12½ per cent for bestsellers (with the corollary that non-bestselling authors find it more difficult to get published). The larger units have also greater selling power: they can advertise more, employ more representatives to persuade booksellers to stock their publications, organise more elaborate distribution methods—in other words, engage in more successful "merchandising" of their wares. The converse of this is that, while threatening the existence of the smaller independent producers, the larger units look to a secure return on their own larger capital investment, and are therefore less likely to be interested in publishing the off-beat or minority interest book which risks showing no profit. Already one large publisher, *Pan*, calculates that in order to sell a paperback of 192 pages at 2s. 6d., the minimum print is 30-35,000, and 90 per cent must be sold for the break-even point to be reached, as compared with 50 per cent for hard-cover books.

It is possible that the formation of larger units in British publishing will defeat its own ends. Books as we have known them till now *are* different from other commodities in one respect: the demand for an old title may continue steadily, if slowly, for many years, and the profitability of the "back list", not least in textbooks, has been a cardinal point in publishing. The Cambridge University Press, for instance, not one of the largest publishers, maintains 1,500-1,600 "live"

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titles, defining "live" as a book which sells 10 or more copies in a year. No supermarket, not even an "independent" grocer, would expect to be asked for a detergent of three years back which has now been superseded by an improved version with built-in brightness. Either the new overlords will have to adapt themselves to slower stock-turnover, and a longer wait for the break-even point, than in other mass-consumption trades, or they will abandon the maintenance of a back-list in favour of the highly risky policy of concentration on immediate successes. Already the paperback boom, and the rush to produce new titles monthly, is causing back-list trouble, since the new titles are demanding display space before the old ones are sold, and rival sales forces are fighting for prominence on the retailers' congested shelves.

Yet traditional considerations are never likely to hold back capital in its search for super-profits, which are often to be made from the breaking of tradition and by the discovery of new markets. The increase of sales-points for paperbacks, for instance, has undoubtedly tapped a new market, including thousands of customers who would never enter a bookshop except in search of stationery—partly because of the fusty *mystique* about books which has been described above. Too much should not be made of the cultural value of this expansion, since from inspection (statistics are as usual lacking) paperbacks sold through newsagents, hairdressers and supermarkets are usually fiction (light or lurid) and "war books", while the "egg-head" paperbacks are sold through bookshops proper, or through "all-paperback" shops. Other new techniques—or rather old techniques on the increase—include door-to-door selling of "educational" books like encyclopaedias; there have been a number of scandals where salesmen have represented themselves as coming "from the education authorities" and have prevailed on parents, anxious for their children's success in the 11-plus, to undertake heavy H.P. commitments for books of doubtful value. Large-scale mail-order advertising is done by firms such as Odhams, which supply direct to the public and so in many cases by-pass booksellers.

Up till recently publishing has been a comparatively easy trade to enter. It requires little equipment, since the physical production of books is carried out by the printer, and available capital can be invested in building up the list. It has also been an easy trade to fail in: of the 360 current members of the Publishers' Association, one third have been in business for less than ten years, while, from the end of the war to March 1962, 104 firms went out of business and there were 20 mergers. While in every productive process there are imponderables at every decision-taking stage, in publishing there is no chance of a pilot or experimental run to test consumer-reaction: a book is either published at a given price and print, or it is not published. The number of "lines" equals the number of titles issued, and, except where a publisher specialises in a narrow field, like books on royalty or dogs, there is no formula for repeating past successes.

Mergers and "Umbrellas"

Finance-capital is nevertheless convinced that, by the laws of nature, there must be some means of extracting super-profits from books as from any other commodity. It has therefore been quietly edging into publishing during the past few years, but significantly more in the paperback and educational sectors than into general publishing. Many of the old-established houses hold their traditional place. Excluding Her Majesty's Stationery Office, which is the biggest publisher of all, the Oxford University Press has the largest output and turnover, while Macmillan, Hodder & Stoughton, Allen & Unwin, and other leading houses are still "family" private companies, and only eight of the large general publishers are public companies. City finance holds a sheltering "umbrella" over groupings of other well-known firms: Heinemann is 100 per cent owned by Thomas Tilling (which "diversified" into publishing, as well as into building materials, glassware, insurance, etc., as a profit-earning source for the funds received in compensation on transport nationalisation). Sixteen firms, including Secker & Warburg and Peter Davies, come under this umbrella. The Charterhouse Trust has a holding in Associated Book Publishers, which includes Methuen, Chapman & Hall, and Eyre & Spottiswoode. The merchant bankers Henry Ansbacher & Co. are connected with the Max Reinhardt-Bodley Head group, while the late property millionaire, Howard Samuel, acquired MacGibbon & Kee and two other firms, as well as making an unsuccessful bid for Associated Book Publishers. These are horizontal groupings in which the constituent firms are alleged to retain separate identities and editorial policies, while sharing overheads. There has not been much vertical integration in the industry: the Purnell and Jarrolds printing groups are each linked with one or two publishers, and smaller printers have similar tie-ups. There are few examples of the whole book sequence, from printer to bookseller, being comprised in one firm: Wm. Collins (a public company) and

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Oxford University Press, for example, though printers as well as publishers, have very small retail outlets of their own.

If general publishing has so far proved unattractive to large-scale risk capital, the picture changes when we approach the type of book which can be marketed as a commodity. The paperback boom is an obvious example. *Penguin* "went public" in 1961, with a share-issue 175 times over-subscribed. Another big paperback development, *"Ace"* and *"Foursquare"*, was the result of a diversification by the tobacco firm Godfrey Phillips. In March 1961, a half-share was sold to the New English Library, a large American paperback firm. Corgi Books are owned by Curtis Publishing (*Saturday Evening Post* and *Ladies' Home Journal*). American attemps at takeovers (Harcourt Brace took Hart-Davis from beneath the Heinemann umbrella in November 1961) denote not only interest in the growth-potential of paperbacks, but also the desire to obtain British imprints in order to exploit the Commonwealth and ex-colonial market, and of course the Common Market. A British imprint is in fact only an extra advantage for American exports to the former Empire, since they are already competing heavily in certain "backward" areas through lower prices for books made possible by the subsidies of the U.S. "Informational Media Guaranty Scheme."

Though British government export subsidies, through the Central Office of Information scheme, are much more modest, our native tycoons are beginning to share their American colleagues' belief that there is money in books. Mr. Roy Thomson, of Scottish TV, has bought two Scottish publishers—Oliver & Boyd, with a good medical list, and Nelson's, an old-established Edinburgh publishing firm with a healthy backlist of textbooks and maps, and with paper-producing interests. He has also started a *Sunday Times* direct-mail bookselling scheme. Granada, also of TV fame, have bought the MacGibbon & Kee interests of the late Howard Samuel. Two of the press empires have book-publishing dependencies: the *Express's* Oldbourne Books is small beer in comparison with the *Mirror* properties of Odhams, Newnes, Waverley Books, Kelly-Iliffe, Longacre and Vista, though these were incidental trophies of victory in the great women's-magazines battle of 1961.

Even if the trend towards investment in publishing continues (and even Penguin reports in 1962 that "competition continues and margins are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain"), there is no sign of any additional capital flowing into retail bookselling proper. With *new* English titles running at 18,000 a year, why is it that profit can only be perceived in publishing yet more books, and not in the more efficient marketing of those already being produced? One answer has already been suggested: "growth potential" lies in production of more books of a certain kind, i.e. the textbook with assured markets at home and abroad, the paperback generating impulse-buying through its bright "package" and point-of-sale availability, the "non-reading book"—cookery-books, do-it-yourself, illustrated books to leaf through while the commercials come on TV—any bound volume, in fact, which can look for long runs to keep unit costs down. Another answer is the nature of bookshop trade, which does not lend itself to the supermarket technique. In spite of self-service layouts and improvements in shop *décor*, bookselling is a "service" trade; it demands certain irreducible staffing levels if it is to be properly carried out, because of the complicated nature of its stock and the ancillary services of advice to customers and special ordering. If it economises too drastically on staff, it cannot fulfil its function. If it does not so economise, its margins are unattractive to capital unless combined with the sale of other goods, as observers of W. H. Smith's experiments with new-style shops will have noticed. It is significant that W. H. Smith, with a century of experience and goodwill behind them, combined with the bread-and-butter of the newspaper trade, are, with Wymans-Menzies, the only existing country-wide chains of retail bookshops.

Retail Bookselling

Other answers are to be found in the traditional attitude of the British ruling class to "culture" as a preserve for an *élite*, whose book-buying was sufficient to support the trade in its gentlemanly days. In spite of some excellent cheap series like *Everyman* and the "sevenpennies" of pre-First World War days, masses of people have grown up since the 1870 Education Act without realising that books were things to be owned. The dog-eared textbooks handed down from one school generation to another through the niggardliness of local education authorities strengthened this impression, as did, paradoxically, the comprehensiveness of the public library service. The book trade has itself never been able to agree on "institutional" publicity to promote the desirability of book-buying in general, except for TV "spots" on Book Tokens and an annual National Book Sale.

It may be, therefore, that the whole pattern of

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the book trade will change rapidly in the next few years, with those general publishers who survive as independent or semi-independent entities selling their output principally to libraries, school-suppliers or for export; with the "new" publishers, in the intervals of making or fighting off takeover-bids from American or local rivals, using new methods of selling through supermarkets and hairdressers, or by direct mail; and with the book-buyer, owing to the virtual disappearance of book-shops, finding it increasingly difficult to acquire any "backlist" books—unless he has recourse to secondhand booksellers, or xerography or some other advance in technique enables him to buy cheaply a copy specially made for him. This dangerous position already exists in the United States, where bookshops are rare and poorly-stocked, many having been driven out of business between the "pocket books" at the drug-store and the price-slashing of the "never-willingly-undersold" department store. One of the results of this failure to sustain outlets for book-buying is that U.S. publishers have come to rely more and more on subsidiary rights, particularly film rights. Certain American bestsellers have clearly been written (under the nanny-like tutelage of publishers' editors) not to be read, but for their film-rights to be sold. A rousing historical setting, a golden-hearted prostitute, and the right degree of "promotion", constitute a feed-back between "the film of the book" and "the book of the film".

What Lies Ahead

If these trends continue the serious general publisher and the stock-holding bookseller will be driven further along a road which the book trade is already taking in company with the other media of mass communication. This is the road of concentration of ownership and standardisation of product, as I have tried to show in *The Big Sell*. There is nothing inherently bad in bigness, as is shown by the large prints of many valuable books in the socialist countries. The trouble lies with those who determine what shall be big: if their criterion is a high and speedy return on capital investment, this is not necessarily related to the social value of what is published, nor does it include provision for widening public appreciation of what books can offer. It covers the importation of poisonous American pulps and paperbacks as well as home-produced "breast-sellers" and "war-books" which are an excuse for tales of violence. As with the other mass media, however, the picture is not uniformly dark. Apart from reputable large publishers like Penguin, who can make cheaply available many important books (as well as a ratio of "objective" anti-Communist tracts knitted up by tame academics), there are a number of small firms who will try to continue, for a small return, to produce books of value as long as they are supported by enough buyers, and the buyers are persistent enough in their demands to persuade some kind of book distributor to obtain the books.

With these possibilities ahead, the preservation and improvement of our system for the production and distribution of Marxist books takes on an added importance. Even should the changes be less drastic than suggested, our books will have to withstand the growing pressures on production and distribution suffered by all "independent" publications. We start with the advantage of many ready-made "sales outlets", if only they are properly used. We also have the advantage that we are not searching for super-profits: our "growth potential" lies in party-building and party education, because for us books *are* different: they are not "loss leaders" or units of turnover, but one of the chief means by which we learn to understand the world and, by understanding, to change it.

THE CHALLENGE OF MARXISM

FIVE LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

Tuesday, 13th November, at 7.30 p.m.
THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY
PROFESSOR GEORGE THOMSON
University of London Union Assembly Hall

Thursday, 15th November, at 7.30 p.m.
THE INADEQUACY OF SOCIOLOGY
SAM AARONOVITCH
London School of Economics

Sunday, 18th November, 7 p.m., at U.L.U.
THE REVOLUTIONARY ARTIST
ARNOLD KETTLE

Tuesday, 20th November, 7.30 p.m., at U.L.U.
SCIENCE AND THE HUMANITIES
PROFESSOR J. D. BERNAL

Thursday, 22nd November, 7.30 p.m., at L.S.E.
WAYS OF INDUSTRIALISING UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
MAURICE DOBB

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Utopia as a Reflection of Social Ideas*

A. L. Morton

UTOPIA, as the name implies, is an imaginary and not necessarily ideal commonwealth, but the idea of Utopia could hardly arise until the possibility of an ideal commonwealth, or at least of one more nearly ideal than any existing society, could be envisaged. In feudal society such a conception was impossible, since, though change could not of course in fact be avoided, it was regarded with suspicion. The feudal ideal was a static, hierarchic system, in which everyone had a rigidly defined status with recognised privileges and obligations. Change was dangerous and was to be avoided as far as possible, the best hope was that a regression into chaos could be prevented, and this was felt to demand a rigid discipline in which feudal lord and feudal church combined to keep serf and burgess in their appointed stations. Under these conditions the nearest approach to utopian thought as we understand it was the fantasy of the lower orders, a topsy-turvy dream world in which the need to toil was abolished and a magical abundance could be enjoyed by all. In most parts of Europe we can find traces of such a fantasy, taking many names and shapes, which may be generalised as the myth of Cokaygne. Such fantasies, naturally, did not commend themselves to, and were scarcely noticed by, the privileged or literate.

It is no accident, therefore, that Utopia coincides with the rise of the bourgeoisie within and in opposition to decaying feudal society, or that it arises directly out of humanism, the ideology of this new class. The humanists rejected the reactionary and pessimistic outlook of feudal catholicism, an outlook that saw this world only as a preparation for the next, man as a wretched creature tied and bound by the chain of his sins and existing society as the poor echo of a more glorious past whose relics they saw around them and on whose learning they fastened parasitically. The humanists rejected the dogma of original sin. They saw in the great advances in the technique of production, in man's ability to control his environment and his fate, the grounds for confidence in future human progress. The *idea* of progress was accepted because the *fact* of progress was for the first time unmistakable. They believed that man was capable of finding happiness on earth by his own efforts and by the exercise of reason. They saw man and nature not as an opposition but as a unity.

The Contradiction of Humanism

For the first time man became the measure, and the best among the humanists believed that the advance of the bourgeois order, which they tended to see rather as the advance of a body of ideas, was the advance of humanity as a whole, breaking the chain of the past and entering upon a new freedom in which all would share. And in a sense, of course, they were justified. Yet here we approach the basic contradiction of humanism: that the bourgeoisie was indeed a progressive, but also an exploiting class, that while bourgeois society was an advance upon feudal society, it laid new burdens upon the masses.

The humanists looked for an epoch of peace and progress. In reality the fifteenth century opened a series of wars more destructive than any in the past, an age of peasant rebellions drowned in blood, of wholesale expropriations and the creation of vast slum populations living on the verge of starvation, of the plunder and extermination of colonial peoples throughout the world. The help of the masses was indeed enlisted by the bourgeoisie to destroy the feudal order, but their expectations were inevitably disappointed. So the age was at once an age of new hopes, and of new despair as these hopes were continually frustrated.

It was with this background that the early, classical Utopias were created, and all this is illustrated most clearly in the life and work of Sir Thomas More, the creator of the first and in many respects the greatest Utopia. He looked upon the hope and despair of his age with an honest, far-seeing eye, and saw that the ruthless destruction of the old society could only be justified if it prepared the way for a true common-

* This article is based on a contribution to the international discussion on "Man and his Future" held last year at Royaumont, near Paris.

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wealth, which must necessarily be classless and communist, because, as he wrote:

> Where possessions be private, where money beareth all the stroke, it is hard and almost impossible that the commonwealth be justly governed and flourish prosperously. Unless you think thus: that Justice is there executed where all things come into the hands of evil men, or that prosperity flourisheth where all is divided among a few.

More's communism is, of course, far removed from that of our own time, and in many respects it looks backward upon an idealised past. Nevertheless he was able, by a remarkable feat of imagination, to see that the best of the past might be combined with the present advance of his time to prepare the way for a new world. Perhaps the fairest estimation of his achievement in this respect comes from that other great utopian William Morris, who wrote in his introduction to Kelmscott edition of *Utopia*:

> In More are met together the man instinctively sympathetic with the Communistic side of Medieval society: the protestor against the ugly brutality of the earliest period of commercialism: the enthusiast of the Renaissance, ever looking towards his idealised ancient society as the type and example of all really intelligent human life; the man tinged with the asceticism at once of the philosopher and of the monk; an asceticism indeed which he put forward not so much as a duty as a kind of stern adornment of life. . . .
>
> But lastly we Socialists cannot forget that these qualities and excellencies meet to produce a sturdy expression of the longing for a society of equality of condition; a society in which the individual man can scarcely conceive of his existence apart from the Commonwealth of which he forms a portion. This, which is the essence of his book, is the essence also of the struggle in which we are engaged. Though doubtless it was the pressure of circumstances in his own days that made More what he was, yet that pressure forced him to give us, not a vision of the newborn capitalistic society, the element in which lived the new learning and the new freedom of thought of his own epoch; but a picture of the real New Birth which many men before him had desired; and which now indeed we may well hope is drawing near to realisation, though after such a long series of events which at the time of their happening seemed to nullify his hopes completely.

More had indeed a remarkably clear vision of the "New Birth", but no answer to the question of how it was to come about. And in fact there was then no visible force capable of effecting such a transformation of society. The bourgeoisie were still too weak and immature to act independently, even supposing that bourgeois society could lead directly to Utopia. Neither More nor any of the humanists dreamed of appealing to the masses, who in any case did not then constitute a revolutionary class. There remained the Prince, the enlightened despot, and nearly all the classical Utopias are represented as being the work of such a Prince. Yet the humanists were too shrewd not to realise the actual characters and interests of existing Princes. It is this dilemma which gives such force and poignancy to More's dialogue in the First Book of his *Utopia* on the desirability of the philosopher taking service under the monarchy: in his book, as in his life, More finally decides in favour of this course, but with a clear understanding that what could be accomplished would be little enough. The philosopher must use all his craft, "and that which you cannot turn to good, so to order that it be not very bad." So he was driven to the unhappy conclusion with which he closes his book:

> So I must needs confess and grant that many things be in the Utopian commonwealth, which in our cities I may rather wish for than hope after.

The Power of Reason

Faced with this problem it is not surprising that all the early utopians from More to Campanella (*City of the Sun,* 1602), Valentin Andreae (*Christianopolis,* 1619) and Francis Bacon (*New Atlantis,* 1627) laid their main emphasis on education. They believed in the power of reason and that men, in general, only needed to be convinced of the correctness of their proposals to put them into practice. This emphasis on education is perhaps not unnatural in any case, given the training and background of the humanists, but it reflects also their lack of understanding (for which we would be foolish to reproach them) of the role of class conflict in the development of society. Since they could not appeal to the exploited it was inevitable that they should appeal to the enlightened. It was still centuries before the idea that the enlightened do not constitute a class could be formulated.

Christianopolis and *New Atlantis* could not have been written without the example of *Utopia,* and Andreae and Bacon fall very short of More's deep understanding of the essential features of a true commonwealth, but their Utopias have an atmosphere of practicality which reflects the growing strength and confidence of the bourgeoisie by the opening of the seventeenth century. Andreae was a man of affairs and in his native town had, as Professor Held says in his introduction to *Christianopolis,* "founded a mutual pro-

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tective association among the workmen in the cloth-factories and dye-works, and supported it from voluntary subscriptions of his parishioners and friends." His Utopia has an almost terrifying likeness to Calvin's Geneva, which he had visited and been impressed by. Of Geneva he wrote:

> Not alone is there in existence an absolutely free commonwealth, but as an object of pride a censorship of morals in accordance with which investigations are made each week into the morals and even into the slightest transgressions of the citizens—first by the supervisors of the wards, then by the aldermen, and finally by the magistrate, as the case demands. As a result, all cursing, gambling, luxury, quarrelling, hatred, conceit, deceit, extravagance and the like, to say nothing of greater sins, are prevented. . . . With our bitterest tears we must lament that this is lacking and almost entirely neglected by us. (Cited from M. L. Berneri, *Journey Through Utopia, p.* 105.)

Bacon was much less interested in changes in structure of society, or in moral questions, than in advances in technique and the extended control by man of his environment through the application of science. The end of our foundation, he wrote:

> is the knowledge of causes and secret motions of things and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible.

They wrote at a time when the bourgeoisie in the Netherlands had already liberated themselves from the feudal Spanish Empire, and when in England a revolution was just about to begin. With this revolution Bacon would have had no sort of sympathy, but his work, as well as More's and Andreae's, had a profound influence on the new school of utopian thinkers which that revolution produced—on Samuel Hartlib, on James Harrington, on Samuel Gott, and perhaps, though less certainly, on Gerrard Winstanley.

In the air of revolution Utopia seemed to be no longer a distant island or an enchanted dream, but a possibility that might take shape in England at a moment's notice. Utopia was seen as the direct and not the dialectical outcome of bourgeois society. With the exception of Winstanley all regard it as the result of a controlled and beneficent capitalism: the classless communism of More has given way to a free-enterprise paradise where property is widely distributed and learning and science encouraged. Hartlib looked confidently to a Parliament composed of gentry and merchants, and it was to the Long Parliament that *A Description of the Famous Kingdom of Macaria* was dedicated in 1641:

> Whereas I am confident, that this honourable court will lay the corner-stone of the world's happiness, before the first recess thereof, I have adventured to cast in my widow's mite into the treasury; not as an instructor or councellor to this honourable assembly, but having delivered my conception in a fiction, as a mere mannerly way; having as my pattern Sir Thomas More and Sir Francis Bacon, once Lord Chancellor of England.

Harrington's *Oceana,* while it had its own special features, resembled *Macaria* in being a constitutional blue-print rather than a Utopia in the traditional sense.

Winstanley—A New Phase

With Winstanley we enter a new phase. Hartlib at the beginning and Harrington (rather less confidently) at a later stage of the revolution, were assured that they were on the direct road to Utopia. Now that kingly (that is, feudal) power had been ended, no obstacle remained to indefinite improvement. Winstanley, even in 1650, saw the situation differently:

> [The] top bough is lopped off the tree of tyranny, and the kingly power in that one particular is cast out. But alas, oppression is a great tree still, and keeps the sun of freedom from the poor commons still; he hath many branches and great roots which must be grub'd up before everyone can sing Zion's songs in peace. (*Gerrard Winstanley, Selections* Ed. L. Hamilton, p. 83.)

If the promise of the revolution was to be fulfilled a further effort of a new kind was called for. Winstanley attempted to enact rather than write his Utopia by calling upon the propertyless to occupy and cultivate the commons and waste lands communally:

> Therefore if the rich will still hold fast to this property of mine and thine, let them labour their own lands with their own hands. And let the common people, that are the gatherings together of Israel from under that bondage, and that say the earth is ours, not mine, let them labour together, and eat bread together upon the commons, mountains and hills. (Hamilton, *op. cit.* p. 22.)

In this way the curse of covetousness, to which Winstanley attributed man's fall, could be lifted and "the earth become a common treasury as it was in the beginning." However naive the means proposed, this is the first time that Utopia was to be the act of the people rather than of princes or philosophers.

Winstanley's attempt to form a utopian community met with no greater success than innumerable subsequent attempts, and after its failure he drew up a more formal utopia in *The Law of Freedom in a Platform* (1651), a utopia which

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follows More's social pattern very closely but has politically a more broadly democratic basis.

With the ending of the Commonwealth in 1660 utopian speculation also halted. From the mid-sixteenth century to the early nineteenth there is no important English utopian work with the solitary exception of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), a utopia of despair of the utmost power and subtlety which it would be useless to attempt to analyse here. In France, on the other hand, throughout the eighteenth century, utopias abound increasingly as we approach the epoch of the revolution. Many of them take the form of the imaginary voyage which seems specially characteristic of French utopian literature, but one, Louis Mercier's *L'an deux mille quatre cent quarante* (1770), is noteworthy as being, I think, the first Utopia to be placed in the future rather than in some remote corner of the earth. This is a fashion that will be increasingly followed as the corners grow fewer and less remote and as the idea of social revolution replaces that of special creation.

Utopias that Themselves Develop

And now two great and almost simultaneous events took place which seemed for the time to bring Utopia once more down to earth. The French Revolution was one, the other was the establishment in the U.S.A. of a virtually pure bourgeois republic unhampered by the feudal survivals which no European revolution could entirely eliminate. Both events caused the most extravagant expectations. If the hopes and speculations of this time can be summed up in a single word, that word is *Reason*. To the bar of Reason everything was brought, kingship, religion, laws, customs and beliefs: whatever could not account rationally for itself was unhesitatingly condemned. In Reason was the key to Utopia, for if only the ideal society could be discovered and clearly demonstrated to be reasonable no-one could seriously oppose it. "Truth," wrote Blake, "can never be told so as to be understood and not be believed." A standpoint that 150 years before had been peculiar to a few individuals like Hartlib now became the universal dogma. That Reason itself had to be examined, that while, for example, it seemed reasonable to the capitalist that all men should be free to exploit and be exploited, this was by no means so clear to the worker, was something still to be understood. It has taken us another 150 years to learn that Reason itself has a class basis.

At this point all that seemed necessary was to sweep away certain negative restraints—monarchy, priestcraft, ignorance — by which men were coerced or deluded into denying Reason. Once this was done the rest would follow easily. The doctrine of human perfectibility might be absurd enough in some of the forms it took, yet it contained in itself the fundamental truth that human nature is not something absolute and unchanging but is itself the product of human life and the actual conditions under which that life is lived. An unending prospect opened out, and here, I think, is the new feature which marked the utopian speculation of this age. Earlier utopians had conceived a perfect commonwealth finished in all its parts and therefore eternally fixed. Now, progress was not merely the road to Utopia, it existed within Utopia, which, instead of having merely a geography now has also a history.

The very extravagance of these hopes led to their swift and total disappointment. As Engels wrote in his *Anti-Dühring*:

> In a word, compared with the glowing promises of the Enlightenment, the social and political institutions established by the "victory of reason" proved to be bitterly disillusioning caricatures. The only thing lacking was people to voice this disillusionment, and these came with the turn of the century.

We can trace the whole process of hope and disillusion typically expressed in the work of the great utopian poet William Blake, in the contrast between the unbounded expectations inspiring such early poems as *Europe, America* and *The French Revolution* and the sombre tone of the later *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, with their perspectives of struggle immensely complex and prolonged. More systematically, the utopian socialists, St. Simon, Fourier and Owen, outlined the tasks necessary to complete the work of a revolution which they felt had halted halfway. It had removed some of the obstacles standing in the way of change: as a bourgeois revolution it had not even begun to set itself the task of ending the basic evil of society—the exploitation of man by man. The positive achievement of the utopian socialists lay in setting this objective before humanity and in the analysing of the defects of existing society, their weakness lay in their inability to see that this further change could only be accomplished by the exploited.

A Turning Point

Nevertheless the idea of socialism was abroad, and as it spread among the masses it became transformed, ceasing to be utopian beginning to be scientific. The turning point here, as in so many other respects, came with the year of revolutions in 1848.

It is impossible to get very far with the writing of a history of utopianism without realising that

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what one is really writing about is the history of a special aspect of the bourgeois revolution: the rise and decline of Utopia cannot be separated from the rise and decline of the bourgeoisie as a progressive class, since at every stage it reflects the hopes, beliefs and fears of the most enlightened members of that class. And it is by the middle of the nineteenth century that the decisive change is apparent. The main tasks of the bourgeoisie in the most advanced countries were accomplished, already the proletariat was appearing as its successor, including in its tasks those which the bourgeoisie had proved incapable of carrying to completion. The Chartist Movement in Britain, the part played by the workers in the European revolutions of 1848, were the clear signs of this change, while with the publication of *The Communist Manifesto* the mission of the classic utopians was ended.

In 1877 Marx wrote to Sorge:

> Utopian socialism, playing with fancy pictures of the future structure of society, is now raging in a much more futile form, as compared not only with the great French and English utopists but with Weitling. Naturally utopianism, which *before* the time of materialistic-critical socialism concealed the germs of the latter within itself, coming now *after* the event, can only be silly ... silly, stale and basically reactionary (*Selected Correspondence*, p. 350.)

Utopianism may be compared to a bridge, which, when one is on the far side of a river is a means of crossing it, but which, when once crossed, only leads *backwards*. Marx, of course, was referring here particularly to Germany, but it is interesting that his letter was addressed to Sorge in the United States, for it was there that utopianism in its new form was to flourish most abundantly in the two succeeding decades. This was perhaps natural, since the U.S.A. was the purest form of bourgeois society that had yet been known. Seen from across the Atlantic at the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the part played by slave and indentured labour diminished by distance, this revolutionary democracy could easily be idealised. It was here that Southey and Coleridge planned to plant their Pantisocracy on the banks of the Susquehanna, while Blake saw it less as a geographical entity than as a symbol of the coming liberation of humanity. A whole host of utopian communities, Owenite, Fourierist, Icarian, Warrenite and the rest were drawn irresistibly thither as the place where their dreams could be realised. Similarly many of the literary utopias of the age—Spensonia (1795), Lithconia (1802) and New Britain (1820)—appear to be little more than the logical developments of the free life of the American frontier, a life in which the freedom persisted after the harships and barbarisms had been overcome. A steady stream of emigrants poured across the Atlantic in search of freedom and prosperity.

The belief that bourgeois society, given a clean start, could *become* Utopia was of brief duration. One by one the utopian communities foundered, the development of capitalism, all the swifter for the absence of pre-capitalist restraints, produced the same kind of corruption and exploitation as in the Old World, often in an aggravated form. When Dickens visited the U.S.A. in 1842 his illusions were quickly shattered, and Lytton, writing his utopian fantasy *The Coming Race* in 1870 makes his hero speak with an almost Swiftean irony about the home of freedom:

> I touched but slightly, though indulgently, on the antiquated and decaying institutions of Europe, in order to expatiate on the present grandeur and prospective pre-eminence of that glorious American Republic, in which Europe enviously seeks its model and tremblingly foresees its doom. . . . Fortunately recollecting the peroration of a speech, on the purifying influences of American democracy, made by a certain eloquent senator (for whose vote in the Senate a Railway Company, to which my two brothers belonged, had just paid 20,000 dollars), I wound up by repeating its glowing predictions of the magnificent future that smiled upon mankind—when the flag of freedom should float over an entire continent, and two hundred millions of intelligent citizens, accustomed from infancy to the daily use of revolvers, should apply to a cowering universe the doctrine of the Patriot Monroe.

It was in this atmosphere of the exploded dream of a free petty-bourgeois society that the extraordinary outburst of utopian writing of which Edward Bellamy is today the only remembered figure took place: it is perhaps not often realised to what an extent he was part of a school. The Chancey Thomas (*The Crystal Button*, 1891), or utopias of John Macnie (*The Diotheras*, 1883), Albert Chavannes (*The Future Commonwealth*, 1892) may be of slight value in themselves but they serve to remind us that the popularity of *Looking Backwards* was due less to any intrinsic merit than to the accuracy with which it reflected the fears of the American middle-class caught between growing monopoly and an increasingly militant working class. All these utopias are, to a greater or less extent, socialist, but their socialism bears a family likeness to old German "true socialism" of which Auguste Cornu wrote in *Science and Society* (Vol. XII, No. 1, p. 112):

> In fact, Marx said, this socialism did not reflect the progress of the proletariat but the state of mind of the German petty bourgeoisie, impotent but yearning, fearing alike the develop-

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> ment of large-scale capital, and consoling itself with an emasculated humanism in which it found its own image idealised.

Or, as Morris put it in his criticism of *Looking Backward*:

> [Bellamy's] temperament may be called the unmixed modern one, unhistorical and unartistic, it makes its owner (if a Socialist) perfectly satisfied with modern civilisation, if only the injustices, miseries and waste of class society could be got rid of; which half change seems possible to him. The only ideal of life which such a man can see is that of the industrious *professional* middle-class men of today, purified from their crime of complicity with the monopolist class, and become independent instead of being, as they are now, parasitical. (*Commonweal*. 22/6/89.)

News from Nowhere

Morris' critique in *The Commonweal* was followed by a more positive rejoinder. *News from Nowhere,* though there are clear indications that he was only giving final shape to something that had long been maturing in his mind, was also written to give what he felt to be a genuinely socialist forecast of the future in response to Bellamy's misleading one. It is by any standards the most important modern utopia, and precisely because it is not, in the ordinary sense, utopian at all. Morris was not merely concerned to draw a delightful and moving picture of a communist society, though he does this with extraordinary success. He first shows how the classless society of the future might grow out of the class conflicts of the present, in this as in so many other respects standing out in strong contrast to Bellamy who envisaged socialism as growing directly out of the victory of monopoly capitalism:

> The nation organised as one great business corporation in which all other corporations were absorbed; it became the one capitalist in place of all the other capitalists, the sole employer, the final monopoly in which all previous and lesser monopolies were swallowed up, a monopoly in the profits and economies of which all citizens shared. . . . The change had been long foreseen. Public opinion had become fully ripe for it, and the whole mass of the people was behind it. There was no more possibility of opposing it by force than by argument.

Deeply Marxist in his approach, if not always in matters of detail, Morris was remarkably free from that dogmatism which has been the darling sin of most utopians. What interested him was not the mechanical and institutional innovations which so delighted Bellamy but the historical movement from present to future and the quality of human living which may properly be expected in a classless society.

News from Nowhere is one of the really great socialist classics, and as such has had a wide influence, though as yet still less wide than it has deserved, but it has had few successors and none which in any sense approach it. Such post-Morris socialist utopias as Anatole France's *The White Stone* (1905) or Robert Blatchford's *The Sorcery Shop* (1907) owe what merit they possess to the ideas of Morris, which they do little more than present in a diluted and weakened form. More vital than either of these was Jack London's *The Iron Heel* (1907). He, even more than Morris, is primarily concerned with the problem of the transition from capitalism to socialism, and he presents a horrifying forecast of the possible development of monopoly capitalism in the direction of what we now call Fascism. His weakness, which may be the result of having absorbed Marxism in the vulgarised De Leonite form which prevailed in the U.S.A. of his time, lies in his inability to grasp the character and role either of a revolutionary party or a revolutionary class.

Retreat from Utopia

The utopias of Bellamy and his school were, without exception, flat, philistine and provincial. Yet even in their emasculated humanism they did stand for certain civilised values, and above all for a confidence in the essential decency of mankind and the possibility of human happiness. The same may be said of the many utopian writings of H. G. Wells, from *A Modern Utopia* (1905) to *Men Like Gods* (1922). Wells, who may be regarded as the last and most powerful representative of the school of Bellamy, stands at the very end of the long tradition of bourgeois humanism, when it had ceased to be a revolutionary creed reshaping the world and had degenerated into a complacent orthodoxy. After a lifetime spent in prescribing confident if sometimes contradictory nostrums, Wells seems in his last years to have realised the futility of them all: the tragedy was that he had nothing with which to replace them.

> Man must go steeply up or down, and the odds seem to be all in favour of his going down and out. If he comes up, so great is the adaptation demanded of him that he must cease to be a man. Ordinary man is at the end of his tether,

he wrote in *Mind at the End of Its Tether* (1945).

After Bellamy and Wells utopianism had still a long way to fall as the bourgeoisie lost the last shreds of confidence in its mission as a progressive class. The classical utopias could all be

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plausibly regarded as in some sense the outcome of bourgeois society. Modern utopian writings only express the fears of a class without a future.

This decline has had two stages, which, naturally, overlap somewhat in time. In the first, the future feared is that of a machine world, which is essentially the world of capitalism freed from its contradictions and then carried to its logical conclusions. In this world man is lost in the machine. The most famous example is perhaps Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World,* but the beginning of the fear may be traced quite early in such books as Percy Greg's *Across the Zodiac* (1880) or Ignatius Donnelly's *Caesar's Column* (1890), in both of which we find the significant complication that the unbridled growth of capitalism produces the ultimate disaster of a socialist revolution that threatens to destroy all civilisation. Yet in all these books, and in a somewhat different and more deeply humanistic way in E. M. Forster's *The Machine Stops,* it is still a super-capitalism run riot which is the immediate enemy.

Since 1917, and still more since 1945, with their proof that socialism is not a dream but a workable reality, a further retreat may be observed. The fear is not now of a catastrophic failure of socialism leading to chaos but of its success, and the typical utopia, or rather anti-utopia, is now the nightmare of a classless society. Indeed, Utopia today is either a classless society or it is nothing. It is this which is so terrifying as Nicholas Berdiaeff revealed in a passage which Huxley quoted as a preface to *Brave New World*:

> Utopias seem very much more realisable than we had formerly supposed. And now we find ourselves face to face with a question which is painful in quite a new way: How can we avoid their actual realisation?

A painful question indeed, and one which is likely to demand more talent than our modern anti-utopians seem to possess. The method adopted in such books as Eugene Zamiatin's *We* (1924) or the later *Ape and Essence* of Aldous Huxley (1948) or George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) is to induce an irrational fear in the mind of the reader (reflecting, no doubt, the fear in their own minds) that any attempt to realise socialism, or indeed to make any major social change, must lead to a world of corruption, misery and tyranny. Let us be content for ever with exploitation and injustice lest worse befall, is their argument. In such "utopias" as these we see the final stage in the degeneration of utopianism, when, no longer content to create imaginary worlds in the abstract, it turns to slandering the actual transformation of the world now going on, a transformation which is making its traditional tasks for ever unnecessary.

Clearly the classical utopia has run its course and cannot be renewed, while a class without a future cannot be expected to create positive utopias. What of those who are actively engaged in building socialism, or are fighting to achieve it? It seems likely that much of the thought and energy which once went into the fabrication of paper utopias is going and will go into more practical and more satisfying tasks. Nor does the conception of society as a process of evolution lend itself readily to the concoction of formal blueprints of the future: we can no longer think of Utopia as a completed project in the way the classical utopians were able to do. Nevertheless the problems of the future are perennially fascinating, for socialists perhaps even more so than for anyone else, and I think we may well see socialist utopias which trace lines of possible development, which suggest stages that may be reached and the way we may pass from one stage to another, and, perhaps most of all, which attempt to imagine how man will change in a changing world. The greatest subject for utopian speculation may well remain what it has always been, the development of man himself rather than of institutions or things.

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Psychology in Learning and Teaching

Eric Lunzer

This article is based on a paper read by the author at a Symposium on "Education and Psychology" held by the Culture Committee of the Communist Party in July 1962. We hope to publish other papers in subsequent issues.

(I) Education and Psychology

EDUCATION may be described as the process whereby society transmits the information and techniques at its disposal to a rising generation, together with its attitudes and beliefs, and, in advanced societies, something of the methods of acquiring new information and new techniques. From such a standpoint, education is as old as society itself. Moreover, the delegation of these functions to specialists dates back to ancient times —even if the status of the teacher has not always been in keeping with the vital character of his task.

There is therefore nothing surprising about the fact that teachers have evolved a considerable body of techniques and know-how which is specifically concerned with the means whereby information and skills (and even attitudes) can best be conveyed from the teacher to the learner. Much of this *theory of education* is of a practical nature, consisting of empirical precepts which have been tried and tested over the years.

There is in addition a multitude of sometimes conflicting theories of a very general type, grounded on the diverse views which philosophers have put forward on the theory of knowledge and on human nature. Here we refer to the views of such men as Plato, Rousseau, Herbart or Dewey. There is no doubt that in spite of their generality, and despite the fact that such theories are generally reflections of opinion rather than statements of fact, they have had a considerable influence over the actual practice of teaching. For example, "progressive" tendencies in education, and especially in infant education in this country, owe much to the views and work of Froebel and, indirectly, of Rousseau.

A body of practical do's and dont's is essential to the teacher's craft. But it does not amount to a science. It has not the generality of a science, and it lays no claim to its explanatory power. Still less can a set of views on human nature and development aspire to the title of a science if it is grounded solely or mainly on *a priori* speculation. For although such theories are general, they are not rigidly tied by experiment, nor are they informed by a knowledge of the more recent advances in physiology and in the biological sciences as a whole.

If the theory of education is to include (or be replaced by) a *science of education,* that science can only be psychology, because it is psychology which is concerned with the theoretical and experimental study of human behaviour and its development. Yet it is not of much help for a psychologist to say to teachers: "Look to psychology for a science of education and base your teaching on that". It is undeniable that if the techniques and know-how available to the teacher are to be converted to determinate and explicit conscious behaviour, fully adequate to the varieties of the teaching situation, this can only be brought about as a result of advances in the relevant field of scientific enquiry, i.e. in psychology. But how far is contemporary psychology itself in a position to meet this need? However complacent or optimistic the psychologist, he is bound to admit that the contribution of psychology to education has so far been distressingly small. One might add that a good deal of that contribution has been negative, tending to foster wrong practices in education, practices which are actually harmful to the adequate fulfilment of its aims. Why?

If learning were no more than the direct complement of teaching, as giving is of receiving, there would be no problem for education. It would be sufficient for the teacher to "tell" and the pupil would automatically and conveniently "know". But learning is a complex process, one which even now is far from adequately understood. It is safe to state that the function of teaching is to "provide the optimal conditions within which learning may occur". But what are those conditions? The problem of learning is the central problem for education.

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(II) Theories of Learning

Learning is also a central problem, if not the central problem, for psychology itself. Much of experimental psychology is concerned with the "theory of learning". Psychologists are interested to find some answer to the question "How is it that the same stimuli (or environment causes) may elicit one reaction (or set of reactions) from an organism on first presentation, and then give rise to apparently new and more adaptive reactions in the course of their subsequent occurrences?" It is clear that there is some modification in the links between "input" and "output", one that takes place over a period of time, and is directly related to experience. In many ways this is indeed the basic question for psychology, since the essential characteristic of animal, and especially human, behaviour is that it is modifiable and adaptive.

With such startling convergence of interests it might seem even more surprising that experimental psychology has not so far proved of more relevance to the practice of education.

In every science, one of the inevitable consequences of increased precision both in the formulation of problems and in the development of techniques directed towards their solution is that there is a tendency towards specialisation. This in turn can lead to the fragmentation and compartmentalisation of knowledge and interests. In those sciences which already possess a solid framework of basic relations upon which to build, the effects of such compartmentalisation are less pernicious than perhaps they might be, for the connexion between one specialised field of enquiry and another is largely situated within that common ground of knowledge. In psychology, despite the wealth of experimental data that has accumulated over the years, it cannot be said that these have coalesced to form a theoretical framework of this sort. If studies in "theory of learning" have not contributed more to the very real problems of human learning which are of interest to the teacher, it is partly because these studies have been carried out in relative isolation, not only from related sciences, but also from other relevant branches of psychology itself.

To pose the question "How do organisms modify their behaviour in the light of experience?" is to limit the problem unduly, if not to prejudge its answer. For such a formulation implies the assumption that there is some one general principle or set of principles governing the process whereby *any* organism modifies its behaviour. This assumption is by no means unreasonable, although it may well be that the unity underlying all adaptation through experience which we call learning, irrespective of level (lower animals, mammals, young children, human adults, etc.), is to be sought rather in a common physiological organisation of nervous processes than in the field of psychology proper. The boundary between physiology and psychology is not an easy one to draw, but whereas the physiologist may be content if he is able to give an adequate account of a functional organisation *within* the connexions of the brain together with the structural basis of that organisation, the psychologist is compelled to centre his attention on the relation between organism and environment, between the successive terms of that organisation, as signifiers, and the totality of the environment, *insofar as it impinges on the organism,* as signified.

In other words, the psychologist cannot escape from the problem of *meaning*—even if, unlike certain philosophers, he seeks the criteria of meaning by means of the observation and experimental manipulation of behaviour rather than by a logical analysis of the relations between the words we use to describe intentions, meanings, contexts, etc. By centring his attention on the search for such factors as may be equally relevant and applicable to *all* learning, the psychologist is led to sidestep that which is specifically psychological in the problems of learning. Those processes the explanation of which is patently not exhausted by such universal principles will then be dismissed because they do not appear to belong to "learning": they may therefore be relegated to some other, less central, field of enquiry.

Here we have the first restriction on "theory of learning". If learning is that which is common to simpler modifications of behaviour, like finding the shortest route to the goal-box in a maze, and the acquisition of knowledge and skills in human beings, it is easier and more convenient to study it in simpler organisms where those factors which appear to be relevant are apparently more subject to experimental control. It is little exaggeration that the scientific study of learning, in the U.S.A. especially, has until fairly recently been largely the study of learning in the rat. Even when the enquiry is extended to learning in higher mammals and human beings, the method of analysis will be largely determined by that initial standpoint, and the type of learning situation selected for study will tend to be such that the mere association of elements in a chain seems to account for most of what occurs: hence the multiplicity of experiments on serial learning tasks such as the memorisation of nonsense syllables. *The content of learning is excluded as a topic of enquiry.*

It is of course well-known that E. C. Tolman,

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who was one of the leading workers in this field, has put forward the opinion—in a single article—that there may be several different kinds of learning. But that article has remained a statement of a general theoretical possibility. It did not lead to any far-reaching revision in the methods and subject of research. Whereas the majority of learning theorists (Thorndyke, Guthrie, Hull, Skinner, etc.) took the greatest care to avoid all reference to meaning as far as possible, Tolman and his school insist on its importance. But outside of that one article, the meaning in question is a generalised meaning—common to all learning—and the aim of this work tends to be largely negative: to demonstrate that the interpretation of some learning (and probably of all learning) requires a reference to meaning, and that such a statement can be made without having recourse to the use of terms which cannot be defined operationally in terms of observable behaviour.

Tolman shared with other learning theorists that deliberate behaviourist outlook which until recently governed psychological enquiry as a whole and studies in learning more especially. From this standpoint, the "explanation" of behaviour must be sought in principles governing the formation of bonds between *stimuli* and *responses*. The former are deemed to be physical events in the environment and the latter are overt reactions on the part of the organism. From this it follows that the awareness of the stimuli themselves is either not a part of psychology at all (belonging properly to the pseudo-psychology of "mental science"), or else it may be taken for granted by the psychologist whose main interest is learning, being relegated to another branch, the psychology of perception. *To the behaviourist student of learning, the essential problem is how the organism acquires new bonds to existing stimuli.* Herein lies a second restriction in "theory of learning".

The scope of the enquiry will necessarily be greatly reduced by this limitation. For it is abundantly clear that any complex process of human learning involves above all a continuous series of re-adjustments to the relevant perceptual situations, depending on the growing differentiation of the behaviours to which they can give rise. To take a simple example, the back page of a newspaper means one thing to a child of two, and quite another to a punter. In other words, learning to read or to follow a newspaper involves *both the differentiation of responses, and, through such differentiation, the differentiation of stimuli,* the formation of new "stimulus complexes", etc. At no point in the enquiry can the stimuli be taken for granted, being equated with "the physical properties of the situation".

No one would deny that the behaviourist standpoint sprang from the forthright rejection of an earlier introspectionist psychology, and hence that it bespeaks a deliberately materialist point of view. But its limitation lies in the divorce of psychology from the study of processes in the human brain. For behaviourism is essentially an attempt to discover a general way of describing regularities in behaviour with reference to physical variables only. While it excludes all reference to "mental events" it is also indifferent to processes in the brain which might correspond to such events. Instead of an explanation of behaviour in terms of underlying processes, we are offered a bowdlerised description of the facts: bowdlerised because the language used is militantly non-mentalistic, but descriptive because the bowdlerisation, which is after all no more than a linguistic subterfuge (often unsuccessful), is easily mistaken for a scientific explanation.

From all this it follows that the findings of experiments carried out within these schools of learning are relevant only or mainly to situations in which the content is relatively simple (from the point of view of the learner), and also clearly delimited—as in the memorisation of word lists. For it is only such "mechanical" processes which bear any reasonable analogy to the sort of animal learning studied in these laboratories. And even here we have little by way of real understanding of the relevant processes. For behaviourist learning theories are not particularly interested in real processes (whether mental or physiological), being content to substitute for these a series of highly speculative relations between "intervening variables", pseudo-entities the exact ontological status of which is never clear, so that they are often regarded even by their inventors as mere linguistic conveniences. Thus the gains of learning theory are very largely restricted to certain generalisations bearing on the effects of reward and punishment on the speed of certain types of learning, delay in reward, interference effects between serial "bits" of learning, etc. It is small wonder that such a "science" should appear of small value to the teacher.[1]

[1] In spite of certain positive contributions of learning theory, the point of these remarks is that such findings are in a sense incidental, inasmuch as the theories which led to their discovery and determine their interpretation are inadequate. It is nevertheless obvious that the present criticism is no substitute for an adequate account of these views. For a critical, but favourable discussion the reader is referred to E. R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*. For a discussion of their bearing on education, see L. P. Thorpe and A. M. Schmuller, *Contemporary Theories of Learning*.

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(III) Language, Thinking and Problem Solving

If the problems of education have derived but little benefit from the experimental study of learning, it might be hoped that the study of problem solving and thinking would prove more useful. Again, since the learning situations studied in the course of experiments devoted to "learning" are in general too simple and mechanical, one might well suppose that the study of language behaviour would do much to rectify the balance.

However, here too, the compartmentalisation already alluded to has in general contributed to a weakening of the theoretical and practical impact of much that has been achieved. Since language pervades much of human learning and most of human thinking, we may begin by a consideration of language. At least three factors are involved in the use of language in thinking and speech. First, there is the *semantic* property of language which links individual symbols with referrents in perception and experience. Second, there is the *syntactical* elaboration of linguistic usage which provides rules for the differentiation of symbols in accordance with their context (tense, mood, number, gender, etc.) and for their combination according to the accepted patterns of speech. Third, there is the abstractive property of language by virtue of which the use of language is not confined to the function of evoking situations in their absence but extends to the manipulation of higher order relations which are at once more general and more abstract than the connexions of immediate experience. The adequate study of language demands that all three aspects be considered together. Thus the elaboration of higher order relations is partly dependent on the acquisition of the necessary symbols, the referrents of linguistic symbols (words) are not confined to perceptual data, but extend to such relations, and finally, the syntactic features of language are themselves elaborated in close connexion with its semantic and abstractive functions. It follows that *language is a complex skill, the elaboration of which needs to be studied in the course of its concrete development in children.*

The meaningful use of language cannot be reduced to a mere chain of verbal responses. As is abundantly clear from the study of language and thinking in aphasia (where the language function is affected by damage to the brain), the content or "meaning" of language is at least partly separate from its verbal expression. Conversely, when language is studied from the standpoint of behaviourism, the mechanism of language learning is generally taken to be identical with the stimulus-response connexions that are alleged to govern other forms of learning. The specific significatory power of language is of course recognised, but only in the sense that the range of stimuli is thought of as being duplicated by a corresponding set of linguistic terms. These linguistic symbols may then be evoked by stimulus-response connexions even in the absence of the material stimuli themselves. But the focus is still too narrowly centred on the semantic property of words. For language is more than a duplicate set of stimuli; it is a vehicle of communication and of thinking, and as such, it is essentially abstractive and generalising.

Much of the work on language is therefore vitiated at least in part by its divorce from the study of development. A similar criticism can be made of the study of intelligence referred to in section V. It also holds of much of the work on thinking and problem solving, which are often studied as something separate both from language and from learning. Thus if rats learning to run mazes are a far cry from the higher reasoning of human beings which psychology desires to interpret, the latter is frequently regarded as having the character of "insightful" behaviour, in the course of which the individual "restructures" the elements of the problem with which he is faced in such a way as to discover its correct solution. But such an interpretation amounts to little more than a description of what takes place in the experience of the adult, when faced with problems which are difficult but (usually) not impossible. (The well-known wire puzzles have sometimes been used in this sort of investigation.) The interpretation is too general, in that it aims to cover all problems; and too superficial in that there is insufficient analysis of its relation to behaviour outside the "problem situation". We are bound to ask what are the underlying processes governing such restructurisations, how far does the experience of problems itself contribute to the learning of relations, what determines the passage of thought from one line of solution to another, how far does previous learning influence the possibility of restructurisation, what are the relations between the types of solution of which an individual is capable and the developmental level to which he has attained. In other words, thinking and problem solution cannot be separated from language, learning and development. Once again, a developmental approach to these problems, combining observation and experiment, emerges as essential to further advance in their understanding.[2]

[2] For a general introduction, see D. M. Johnson, *The Psychology of Thought and Judgment.*

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(IV) Development

It is apparent from the foregoing that a great deal of experimental work in psychology is partly vitiated by its failure to adopt a developmental standpoint. However, although there is no dirth of studies which concentrate on the character of development, these do not by themselves meet the need. And the reason is not far to seek. For when problems of learning, of perception, of language and of thinking are considered independently of development, as basic questions of general import, the study of development itself inevitably tends to degenerate to the mere empirical listing of behaviour of which children are capable at successive ages. It is no accident that maturation is seen as all-important, and that the successive appearance of increasingly elaborate forms of behaviour is attributed to spontaneous growth rather than to specific learning. It cannot be denied that maturation plays a considerable role; but the problem once more is to analyse individually the elaboration of those processes with which we are concerned, and to study the course whereby behaviour is modified at successive stages.

Above all, it is not sufficient to accept a random essay of developmental tasks, and from these to work out norms for their acquisition by the "average" child. For to do so is to evade the problem of analysis: what is it that determines the solution, and how can it be facilitated. The study of development provides a close parallel to the intelligence testing movement. It is therefore worthwhile turning to this before concluding this analysis of what appear to be salient weaknesses in psychological research, at least until a very recent period.

(V) Educational Psychology and Mental Abilities

The more rigidly experimental study of learning has until recently been very largely the preserve of comparative ("animal") psychologists. It has offered but little to the educational psychologist which might prove generally applicable to the classroom situation. The latter, seeking for a way to fill the void between these somewhat abstruse generalisations about learning and the very real difficulties in learning encountered by the teacher, is compelled to bring back the learner himself into the field of enquiry. But just as the learning is studied by the experimentalist without reference to the learner, so the learner is studied by the educational psychologist without reference to the learning. The experimentalist purports to tell us how the learner learns. We are left in doubt as to why it so often happens that he fails to learn! The only answer that can now be given is that some learners are better than others. The doctrine of innate differences in "intelligence" and other "aptitudes"—with its crucial failure to analyse the processes which might be described as "intelligent", etc.—is a natural complement to the mechanical associationism of behaviourist learning theory.

It would be ridiculous to deny that there are considerable differences between individuals in the adaptivity of their reactions to situations in general, and to classroom learning situations in particular. But once again, the business of psychology is surely to analyse the processes involved in meeting situations of varying complexity and adapting to them, and only in the light of such analysis can any fruitful conclusions be reached as to the reasons why some individuals prove more adaptable (teachable) than others. And by the same token, it should be increasingly possible to raise the learning power of all (which is not at all the same thing as to eliminate individual differences).

The fundamental criticism of theories of intelligence is that they are essentially statements of despair. Why does Johnny do well at school while Jimmy does not? Because Johnny is more intelligent, has more "*g*", etc. But intelligence is not a "thing" of which one can have more or less: it is the description of a whole series of processes which may take place smoothly or with difficulty, and the study of these cannot be sidestepped without detriment to the advance of education as a whole.

The study of factors of ability (and personality) constitutes an added refinement to the theory and practice of psychometry, and is open to similar criticisms. It is possible that the study of correlations between the several types of task at which different individuals prove most successful will ultimately show some correspondence with the thinking (or affective) processes involved in these tasks. But it remains that the mere statement that Johnny has low "numerical" ability is no explanation of why Johnny is poor at arithmetic. It is a re-statement of the sad fact in pseudo-technical jargon. The once popular notion that human ability relied on a variety of "faculties" of the mind (memory, reasoning, etc.) is unanimously rejected today, and the mode of explanation implicit in that doctrine is now recognised to be none other than the hypothesis of a lot of little men in the machine. But the much more scientific "factors" are still the old "faculties" in a new guise, and the principal difference is merely that the faculty psychologists maintained that the faculties were trainable, while the factor psycholo-

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gists argue that they are not. The optimism which was so much a keynote of the nineteenth century appears to be played out; but at any rate in this field little else has changed.

The psychology of mental abilities cannot offer a great deal of help to the teacher in his search for better ways of teaching. It offers much to the administrator in his desire to select the most rewarding pupils for real education, leaving others to make do with more "practical" substitutes. Recent research on the effects of streaming, on the variability of intelligence, on the teachability of defectives, etc., and recent successes shown by "failures" in comprehensive and secondary schools have contributed to a serious weakening of the standing of such theories of ability. They demonstrate that the practices of streaming and selection greatly exaggerate and perpetuate the very differences with which they aim to cope.

However, the deficiencies of intelligence testing are well known to readers of this journal. What is perhaps less widely appreciated is that the entire basis of such theories is fundamentally unscientific, because they are content to ascribe real but unanalysed difference in behaviour to hypothetical and unanalysable differences in fictitious entities. The aim of science is surely to explain the superficial reality in terms of real underlying processes at lower levels of organisation, and higher levels of generality. This is precisely what such theories reject as impossible, or unworthwhile. It is true that the end is far from in sight. But the attempt to seek shortcuts in terms of mere empiricism is as dangerous to scientific advance as it is harmful to progress in education itself.

(VI) Towards a New Educational Psychology

For all the above strictures on much of recent and current work in psychology, the present article is written from a conviction that in the long run advance in educational practice is dependent on advance in psychological research. Both the preceding remarks and the following are of course concerned only with those aspects of general and educational psychology which have the most direct bearing on cognition and learning in classroom practice. The study of affective factors on human learning and relationships falls outside the scope of this discussion, even though its importance is doubtless equal.

What then are the chief characteristics of the sort of research which should contribute directly both to an increase in our understanding of the fundamental mechanisms involved in learning and cognition and to the refinement of teaching methods?

First of all, the study of learning needs to be carried out in full recognition of the possibilities of development in the learning itself. The very process of learning is different at different stages of development, depending on the progressive elaboration of successive reasoning processes involving new relational structures. Second, the study of learning needs to be carried out with strict regard to the content of such learning, i.e. what is being learnt. For it is only by means of the close analysis of the successive steps by which children acquire the various skills and techniques demanded by the needs of society and the curriculum of the school that we may expect to gain a richer insight into the processes involved in their mastery. Third, it is essential to be continually aware that the mental understandings involved in such learning will correspond at every stage to actual processes in the nervous organisation of the brain, so that the formulation of more general theories of learning cannot be divorced from the study of the physiology of the brain. Fourth, learning of more complex fields may lend itself to an approach in terms of the progressive organisation of various component skills, where the successive achievements rely on the automisation of more elementary processes. However, it should be added that such automatisation itself requires a detailed analysis in each specific context, both with respect to those antecedents which facilitate it and with respect to its effects on subsequent learning. Finally, the role of language and problem solving in learning needs to be analysed experimentally in the context of concrete learning problems, and at every phase of development.

In spite of the negative character of most of this paper, it must not be assumed that such work is entirely lacking in the West; still less in the Soviet Union. As far as the latter is concerned, the work of Luria, Elkonin, Zaporozhets, Leontiev, and many others corresponds fairly closely to the above criteria. Nor is this surprising in view of the Soviet emphasis on the close connection between physiology and psychology, as pioneered in the work of Pavlov, together with the generally accepted Marxist thesis on the need for the closest unity between theory and practice.[3]

But it is not only in the Soviet Union that such work is flourishing, even if the scale of this work is probably greater and its history is longer. To take the field of mathematics teaching, there has of recent years been a much heightened interest in the teaching of this subject in every country in

[3] See *Psychology in the Soviet Union*, ed. Brian Simon; *Recent Soviet Psychology*, ed. N. O'Connor. See also *Educational Psychology in the U.S.S.R.*, ed. Brian and Joan Simon (to be published by Routledge & Kegan Paul towards end of 1962).

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the West, and the work of Dienes, mainly in this country, may be cited as an example of the sort of fundamental approach to educational problems which holds considerable promise.[4] Again, a number of studies in the elaboration of reading seem to show due respect to the sort of considerations we have been urging, one of the most recent of these being that of Stott in his "Zest" approach to reading. One might add that, in spite of the avowedly behaviourist orientation of Skinner in the U.S.A., the development of teaching machines and programmes cannot but lead to advances in educational understanding, because the designing of such programmes necessitates the detailed analysis of skills alluded to above, while the success or failure of the programme acts as a correcting factor. Or again, in the field of language learning and linguistics, important work is now in progress, mainly in the U.S.A., with far greater emphasis on the syntactical aspects of language, and less on the semantic. Finally, in spite of the fact that the work of Piaget and Inhelder in Geneva is not directly concerned with education, it remains that their thoroughgoing analysis of certain fundamental aspects in the growth of human understanding provides an essential foundation to the analysis of learning skills. Some of the current work by Peel, Lovell (and the present writer) in this country, and by Zheminska in Warsaw may be regarded as attempts to elaborate the implications of Piaget's work for education.[5]

The thinking teacher is often too well aware of the limitations and shortcomings of psychological theory. But it would be a pity were he to leave the field in disgust, placing his reliance exclusively on his own concrete experience. In education as in every other field, the best hope of progress lies in scientific advance. Both the psychologist and the teacher have much to gain from the closest collaboration between the two.

[4] Dienes, Z. P., *Building Mathematics.*

[5] See E. A. Peel, *The Pupil's Thinking;* K. Lovell, *The Development of Mathematical and Scientific Concepts in Children;* E. A. Lunzer, *Recent Studies in Britain Based on Jean Piaget* (N.F.E.R.).

Discussion contribution on:

The Liberal Revival

Jack Dunman

THE statistics of the "Liberal Revival" are given in Bill Wainwright's article (*Marxism Today,* September 1962), but a deeper analysis of their policy is surely needed; and when made, reveals some very unpleasant and dangerous features.

Those of us who were active in the thirties are probably still influenced by our contacts with the liberals of that time. They were active in the campaigns against Fascism, in Germany, and elsewhere, and fought vigorously for support for Republican Spain, often taking a more militant and effective stand than right-wingers in the Labour Party. Their opposite numbers in several continental countries were, along with the Social Democrats and the Communists, the three main pillars of the Popular Front. They looked capable of performing the same role here had a Popular Front come into existence in Britain.

In short, at that time, there was a big element of militant, progressive, and genuine democracy in their attitude. This probably derived from the fact they had some kind of class-basis among the petty-bourgeoisie.

Then came the war and the Labour landslide of 1945, and the Liberal Party, which had already started to fade out during the war, to all intents and purposes disappeared from the scene.

It is absolutely correct that its "Revival", which no one in 1945 would even have dreamt of, arises only from the failure of the Labour Party under right wing leadership to fight the Tories, and the identity in practice of the policies of "the two main Parties" on all fundamental issues. People who are not ready to accept Communism or are conditioned against it, are *bound* to look round for an alternative. It is this situation which also has made it possible for British Fascism to lift its head again.

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No Basis for Co-operation

But it is necessary to understand that the "Revived" Liberals have *nothing whatever in common with the Liberals of the thirties*. The basis for co-operation between them and the Left no longer exists; and the Liberals are the enemies both of the working class and of democracy.

Note, first, that they are playing no part in the present fight against fascism and very little in that against race discrimination, which is the acid-test of democracy just now.

Second, that their enthusiasm for alliance with Adenauer and de Gaulle in the Common Market and their hypocritical attitude to the Bomb, supporting American, but opposing British deterrents in an attempt to cash in on the C.N.D., is more reactionary than the Tories, because it represents even more complete submission to the U.S.A.

But it is their home policy which is most significant. This is not the result of an attempt to construct a policy in the very narrow space between the Labour Party and the Tories. Nor is it, as Wainwright implies, a collection of proposals designed to attract various sections of the people. It is a quite consistent, anti-working class policy.

Its basis is anti-Communism: and in this connection alone they trade on their democratic past, and make themselves out to be more "genuinely" anti-Communist than the Tories. "Profit-sharing" remains prominent among their economic proposals; and when the class struggle is mentioned they talk about "putting an end to that kind of nonsense", and with this is connected their expressed desire to limit by legislation the powers of the Trade Unions.

True, they talk also against the monopolies, but anti-monopoly measures under capitalism are normally harmless, and sometimes help the monopolies. Anti-monopoly talk, and promises to do away with the class struggle, were the stock in trade of Hitler, and Mussolini before him, when struggling for power.

Dangerous Aspects

It is this that seems to me to be the really sinister aspect of the "Liberal Revival"! The open fascists have their part to play; but at a time when Conservative and Labour policies are hardly distinguishable, Fascist ideas have their opportunity, and they are undoubtedly pushing their way into the policy and attitude of a Party which, because of Labour's failure, may become increasingly important in the near future. We should recognise this danger and do more to expose it; *not*, obviously, by accusing liberals of "being Fascists".

It is good that thousands of people, dissatisfied with Tory and Labour policy, are seeking an alternative. The *seekers* are potential Communists, but we shall win them all the better if we understand where the leaders, who know very well what they are about, are going.

I believe this analysis would be fully confirmed by a detailed study of their policy; Bill Wainwright's accusation of "all things to all men" fits in with it, but does not go deep enough. Perhaps I ought to say that the strength of my own feelings on it is no doubt partly due to a number of personal contacts with one or two leading Liberals in recent years, when I have been really shaken by the ferocity of their anti-Communism, anti-trade unionism, and above all by their sublime determination to "end the class struggle" without ending capitalism. That was the purpose of the concentration camps.

Huxley and Humanism

John Lewis

I ENTIRELY agree with Pat Sloan in his criticism of the weak and erroneous views expressed by many of the contributors in *The Humanist Frame*. It is, however, far too simple a course to damn any book that contains occasional anti-Marxist statements regardless of its general trend. We sometimes imagine that the more enemies and the fewer allies we can find the better Marxists we are. That is surely a mistake—we want to unite all progressive forces, Marxist and non-Marxist, in the struggle against reaction and obscurantism. We are prepared to join forces with Christians on many issues without demanding their adherence to Marxist doctrine; and in the realm of philosophy and science there are progressive individuals and movements, often sadly misinformed about Marxism but quite definitely on the progressive side. Such a scientist is Julian Huxley and the basic theme of his book is that the self-contained world of nature, as one all-

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encompassing system, is adequate for the comprehension not only of the physical and sub-human but the whole world of man and civilisation without recourse to a deity, a vital force, transcendental purpose or the supernatural in any form.

Huxley's few inadmissible statements are not in the slightest degree integral with his thesis, which is wholly naturalistic. There is no "thinly disguised idealism" about any of his scientific theories. Let us consider the sentences to which objection can be taken:

1. *"A new religion"*: but this explicitly excludes the supernatural and turns out to be no more than the recognition that we must attempt to deal with the relations of men to nature and to their fellows in the light of the universe seen as a unitary and evolutionary process, that the wonders of life should fill us with awe, and the duties with which human demands confront us are sacred. I think there is much unnecessary verbiage in the elaboration of this "religion" shorn of the supernatural, but it boils down to simple humanism.
2. The *materialism* he rejects is obviously mechanistic materialism—which indeed "cannot provide us with an adequate basis for human life." Marxism rejects this form of materialism also.
3. *Civilisation as "a succession of idea-systems"* based on the successive stages in the discovery and development of a scientific understanding of nature. There is no suggestion here of ideas developing in a vacuum; always they are related to man's scientific and experimental comprehension and manipulation of nature. Huxley is incomplete here, but not basically wrong—but so might a dozen other first rate scientists be.
4. *"Laws did not exist before men of science formulated them."* Can Pat Sloan mention a scientific law that is not formulated by men of science? Ordered facts and causal relations exist, but it is arguable that by "laws" we mean precisely *our formulation* of causal connections.

Huxley's Work on Evolution

But what Pat Sloan omits to tell us, and, I think, fails to understand, is the basic thesis of this essay, of the whole book, and of Huxley's work in the field of evolution over the past fifty years. Firstly then, this work consists of a vast amount of research, theoretical formulation and general theory of a purely scientific nature, and of course totally excluding vitalistic short cuts, teleological conceptions and supernaturalistic theories. All this work is what Marxists would call materialistic. It is summed up in his book *Evolution: the Modern Synthesis* (1942), a book of recognised authority and considerable importance. Evolution is not a finished theory. It has opened out into an enormous field of investigation, discovery and theoretical advance and is still pushing out into the unknown in all directions and occupying the attention of scores of able biologists—among whom Huxley is a distinguished figure.

Secondly, he has devoted considerable attention to the problem of finding the criteria of evolutionary progress without reference to standards and goals outside nature. In this he has successfully refuted the philosophers who demand a standard *outside* the system of nature wherewith to judge whether progress has occurred.

Thirdly, for over twenty years he has been working out the principles involved in the evolution of man in society, to show that the sub-human processes of mutation and survival, which *produce* man, are, in society, replaced by a process of social development only possible to the intelligent tool-user and leading to social organisation and the appearance of ethical behaviour. This he has set forth in *The Uniqueness of Man* and many other books.

In this development of evolutionary theory Huxley, Medawar and Waddington have broken entirely new ground and made a distinctive advance in evolutionary theory; and their work is not merely new in its theoretical formulation but is based on a considerable amount of new experimental work and observation. I find it fully consistent with Marxism * and indeed provides Marxism with solid factual and theoretical support. This is what Marxism demands, Marxism does not stand as a theoretical system outside of and independent of empirical scientific discovery. That must go on at the hands of specialists and as it advances it will give further concrete content to Marxist theory and enable us to develop and expand our Marxist understanding of nature, of man and of society. In this great work non-Marxist physicists, chemists, biologists and anthropologists, whether they understand Marxism or not, are building and re-building that great fabric of scientific knowledge on which we all depend and on which alone Marxism rests. We should be grateful to them. We must learn from them. To fail to recognise the value of their work is to cripple our Marxism. To reject and despise them is obscurantist folly.

* See my *Man and Evolution* (1962).

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Our Theatre in the Sixties

Arnold Wesker

I appreciate the kind things Arnold Kettle has said about me in the September issue of your journal.* But I confess to some incredulity when he suggests I am "almost afraid of politics". Of all the writers in the theatre today, I would have thought I was the last one about whom this could be said, and I suspect Arnold Kettle agrees with me, since in contradiction with that observation he pointed out earlier on in that article that *Roots* and *Chips with Everything* are "plays about issues with the Brechtian aim of suggesting to the audience that they should change the world they live in". Could I possibly write a play suggesting to an audience that they should change the world they live in without it being political?

Mr. Kettle must know very well that whatever its merit as a theatre piece *Chips with Everything* is a political play about the class struggle which tells the working class that this is the way it's fooled and informs those in power that we are aware of the way in which they fool us.

Bridget Andrews

I CANNOT agree with Arnold Kettle's praise of Arnold Wesker's play *Chips with Everything*.* Of course it is good to see an anti-militarist play and from this point of view it has moments of considerable impact. In particular the part of Corporal Hill was brilliantly performed. But the play is also about class conflict, and it is here that I feel that Wesker is all at sea.

The central theme is the relationship between Pip (the ex-public schoolboy who hates his background but in the end sides with the officers) and the working-class conscripts. It seems to me that the latter are altogether too backward to be credible. All the moments of revolt are organised and led by Pip—from singing the Cutty Wren at the Xmas Party to organising coke-stealing. The working-class conscripts on the other hand are shown quite devoid of initiative or organising ability. Not exactly working-class deficiencies! There are some long—and to me sickening—conversations between Pip and Charles, a working-class youth, who wants to be friends with Pip. There is one in particular where Charles begs Pip to teach him economics—only he can't *say* the word. It goes like this:

> "*Charles*: I want to know about—I don't even know how to put it, about—you know, you know the word, about businesses and raw materials, and people working and selling things—you know, there's a word for it—
> *Pip*: Economics.
> *Charles*: Enocomics—that's it.
> *Pip*: Economics, not enocomics.
> *Charles*: EE—mon—omics.
> *Pip*: No, Ee—
> *Charles*: Ee—
> *Pip*: con—
> *Charles*: con—
> *Pip*: om—
> *Charles*: om—
> *Pip*: ics.
> *Charles*: ics.
> *Pip*: Economics.
> *Charles*: Economics. There, about that could you? I'd listen, you could draw diagrams and graphs", etc.

One does not of course expect a group of very young conscripts to show the grasp of economics of the average active trade unionist or shop steward, the least of whom today can argue a wage claim with a degree of sophistication which might surprise Arnold Wesker. But personally I cannot feel enthusiastic about a play which portrays working-class youth as being quite so educationally sub-normal, ignorant, supine and altogether lacking in most of those positive qualities which experience has tought us to associate with the working class. Of course, the bourgeois critics liked the play; its how they think the working class are.

* In *Marxism Today*, September 1962—"Our Theatre in the Sixties".

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